STREET SPIRIT

Volume 21, No. 6 June 2015 Donation: $1.00

A publication of the American Friends Service Committee

JUSTICE NEWS & HOMELESS BLUES IN THE BAY AREA

Life at Ground Zero of the Nuclear Arms Race

How Jim and Shelley Douglass nonviolently confronted the Auschwitz of Puget Sound.

by Terry Messman

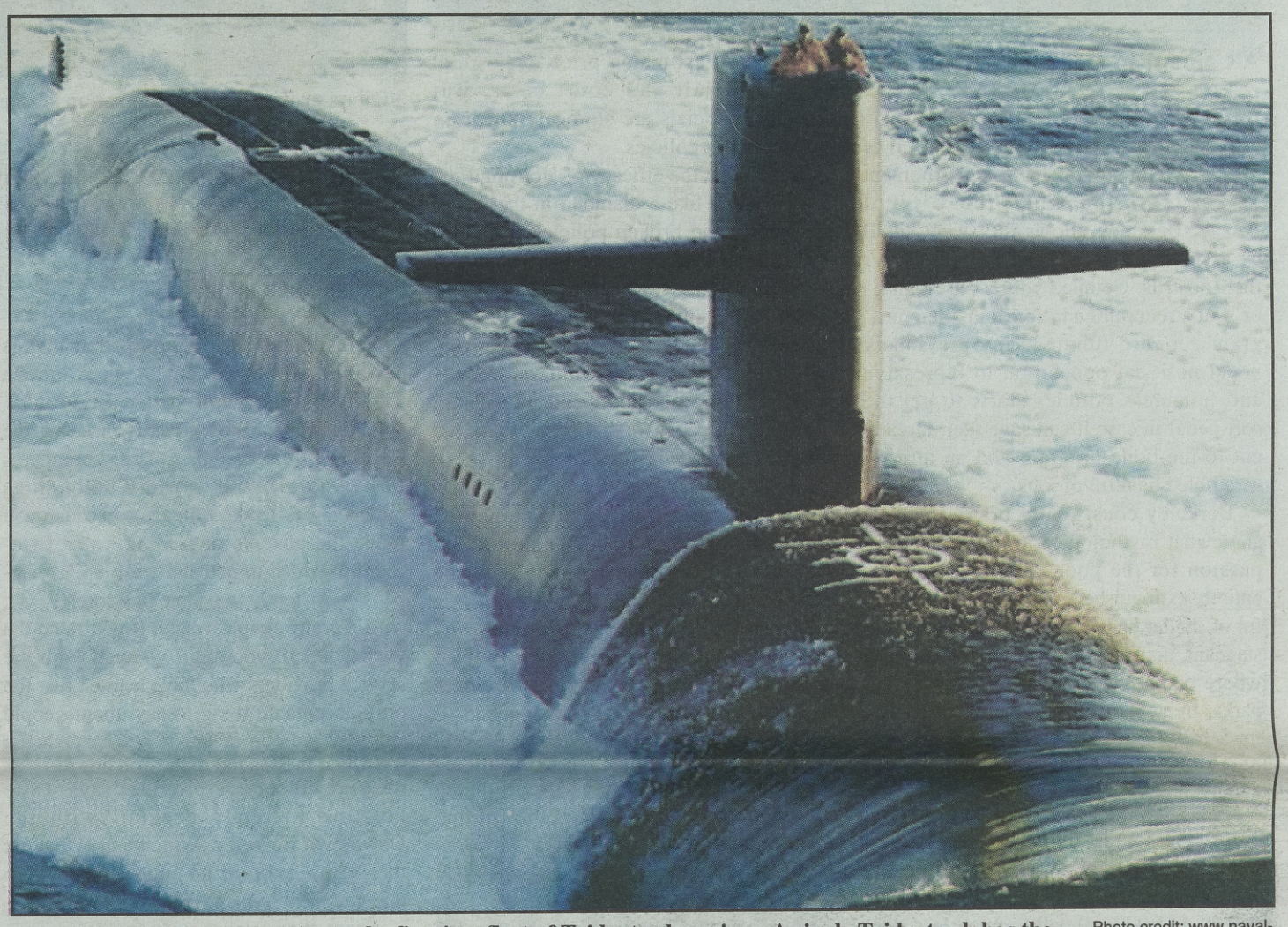
Jim and Shelley Douglass helped to organize one of the nation's most significant campaigns of nonviolent resistance when they uprooted their lives, left their home behind, and literally moved right next door to Ground Zero of the nuclear arms race, in a home adjacent to the Bangor Naval Submarine Base in Kitsap County, Washington.

Their new next-door neighbors were a fleet of Trident submarines and an unimaginably destructive stockpile of Trident missiles in weapons bunkers.

In an interview, Jim Douglass starkly described the genocidal power of this weapons system. "A single Trident submarine could destroy an entire country. A fleet of Tridents could destroy the world."

Lockheed missile designer Robert Aldridge had visited the Douglasses to warn them that Trident missiles were first-strike nuclear weapons due to their pinpoint accuracy and cataclysmic firepower, and would be based on Puget Sound near Seattle. In response, the couple moved onto 3.8 acres of land bordering the Bangor naval base on the Hood Canal.

They founded the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action in December 1977. Jim Douglass explained that they could not offer genuine resistance to Trident by organizing protests from the outside, so the couple moved next to the naval base and became part of the very fabric of the community in Kitsap County. There, as neighbors, they began reaching out to the naval employees working at the Trident base.



The USS Ohio (shown above) was the first in a fleet of Trident submarines. A single Trident sub has the explosive power of several thousand Hiroshima bombs and could destroy every city in an entire nation. Photo credit: www.naval-technology.com

Their new home sat on a piece of land that shared 330 feet of fence with the Bangor naval base. On one side of that fence, the U.S. Navy was equipping a fleet of Trident submarines with enough firepower to incinerate millions of civilians in a radioactive firestorm and destroy every major city in every country in the world. On the other side of the fence, the Ground Zero Center began building a nonviolent movement based on the teachings of Martin Luther King and Mohandas Gandhi.

On one side, U.S. marines with shoot-to-kill orders guarded nuclear warheads in storage bunkers. On the other side, activists held nonviolence trainings and prepared to go to jail for obstructing the arms race.

Ground Zero members gave leaflets to thousands of workers entering the Trident base every week for several years.

Activists by the hundreds were arrested for climbing the fences surrounding the naval base, walking inland to pray for peace at high-security nuclear weapons bunkers, blocking trains carrying hydrogen bombs into the base, and sailing their small boats in a peace blockade of the massive Trident submarine protected by one of the world's largest naval forces.

See **Life at Ground Zero** *page 5*

Time to Abolish Berkeley's Ambassador Program

Story and photo by Carol Denney

Sitting is not a crime in Berkeley. Loitering and sleeping are also not crimes in Berkeley, at least not yet.

But the "ambassadors" hired by the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) freely admit and even formally present themselves as monitoring and curbing these behaviors, as witnessed by those attending the Peace and Justice Commission in a taped hearing on Monday, May 4, at the North Berkeley Senior Center.

The DBA's ambassador program has apparently unilaterally determined, independent of any law or community standard, that these legal behaviors are "inappropriate." DBA ambassadors are walking around in the dubious authority of their bright green uniforms curbing the behavior of poor people, panhandlers, and people who appear to be homeless — absent any basis in law, any probable cause, any authority of any kind, and without any oversight.

The ambassadors are putting on a public display of institutional discrimination so visible and obvious that they made it part of their public presentation on May 4 before Berkeley's Peace and Justice Commissioners, many of whom seemed understandably appalled.

The DBA staff and ambassadors did not mention even once that they are the "eyes and ears of the police," as their website states. The ambassador who was their primary presenter at the meeting gave a lengthy view of himself as a benign presence on the streets.

It was a highly revealing moment, for he spoke just before a citizen read an affidavit by someone who witnessed the same ambassador abusing a senior homeless man with threats and profanity only weeks before.

Even on the occasions when ambassadors manage to refrain from threats and profanity, it is absurd that a small, unrepresentative landlord's lobby — the DBA —

See **Abolish the Ambassadors** *page 10*

Two ambassadors (seated at left) join Lance Goree and John Caner of the DBA in describing the ambassador program to Berkeley's Peace and Justice Commission.

Housing First — But Not in Berkeley

A Column on Human Rights

by Carol Denney

Service providers train like Olympic athletes for the moment in spring when the City of Berkeley allows the sweet smell of a small pot of money to drift under their nostrils. Coupled with a city manager's dry recommendation that their program get zero funding, any previously vocal political opposition to repressive anti-homeless policies starts to get the soft-pedal in case it can save their already cut-to-the-bone program and an already scrambled handful of jobs.

Berkeley consistently brags about its somewhat mythological tradition of compassion for the poor, a compassion not entirely extinguished. There are still a handful of shelter beds, yet it adds up to a pretty stagnant, inadequate number in a landscape where people have come to assume their parks, freeway overpasses, and any vacant space will inevitably become, at least temporarily, somebody's home.

Officials in Utah announced recently that they had reduced their "chronically homeless" population by 91 percent with a Housing First policy which gave people housing and social work assistance at a cost of $11,000 annually, much less than the $17,000 estimated price of hospital visits and jail and court costs. But Berkeley officials are strangely silent on Housing First policies.

It isn't that the efficacy of Housing First doesn't shine like a diamond in the sea of ineffective and broken policies related to poverty, joblessness, homelessness, mental illness, drug abuse, etc. The Berkeley City Council is no different than other city councils nationwide. Its members are a relatively intelligent crew, even compassionate if you're willing to include slipping a dollar (a whole dollar!) into the new "Positive Change" donation boxes downtown.

But the entire "service provider" network is designed to help people get off the street, maybe get a bowl of soup, and find housing somewhere else in some other town — *but not in Berkeley*.

The little donation boxes downtown? Free bus tickets — *out of town*. Evicted with nowhere to go? Service providers will help you find scarce shelter space — *in Richmond*. People put through the traditional police wringer who find themselves either in the court system, or the mental health sleighride, or both, will find themselves in Oakland or Dublin — *not in Berkeley* — which makes them somebody else's problem.

Our present housing policy angles toward housing for a group that makes $74,000, or 80 percent of an Alameda County Median Income listed as $92,900.

Whatever housing crisis is faced by the $74,000-a-year crowd, it hardly compares to having all your worldly belongings hurled into a trash compactor because you made the mistake of finding a real bathroom in which to pee and wash up, as happens consistently to people in Berkeley.

It's pretty simple, really. If you're on the City Council, you align yourself with the service providers who have learned that the only acceptable thing to say about people shipwrecked on our streets is what a shame it is when they spend money on booze — as the shrewd service provider says while hoisting a trendy cocktail with the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) at their ghost town of an annual meeting so that you have some political cover.

From there you barely have to say a word. You'll be surrounded with developers and property owners (the majority of the DBA board) who will even write the next round of anti-homeless laws for you as they just did with the upcoming anti-blanket law. Because they care, they really care — about turning our common spaces into flowerpot-pocked Disneylands while converting what's left of our housing to condos.

Berkeley's commitment thus far is to nod vigorously at the practicality and morality of Housing First policies, and to "ooh" and "aah" over Utah's and Arizona's successes, while making sure that any actual housing produced in the city is limited to the not-quite-in-our-echelon-yet-but-trying crowd stuck at around $75,000 a year where season tickets to the theater compete with the family reunion at Leech Lake. You're not there yet? Well, then, best of luck. And if not, see you under the bridge!

Vigilers protest the criminalization of sleep and blankets in Berkeley. Lydia Gans photo

Berkeley brags about its somewhat mythological tradition of compassion for the poor. Evicted with nowhere to go? Service providers will help you find shelter — *in Richmond.*

Vitally Needed Programs in South Berkeley Face Cuts

Op-ed by Sally Hindman

The City of Berkeley has the choice before it this year, and over the next three years, to either approach community change taking place in South Berkeley with respect and deep concern for its longtime residents, or to let the "market" drive out programs that serve our poorest citizens, allowing the neighborhood's face to be redrawn by the highest bidder. All of us can play a role in that battle of choices this June!

The City's two-year Community Agency funding recommendations are currently slated to cut funds by $250,000 for ten South Berkeley nonprofits serving homeless and other underserved people, including youth and people with mental health challenges.

Unless changed, the recommendations zero out funding for Youth Spirit Artworks, significantly cut monies to Berkeley Drop-In Center, and reduce dollars to Life Long Medical Care, East Bay Community Law Center, Through the Looking Glass, A Better Way, Ephesians Children's Center, Bay Area Outreach and Recreation, McGee Avenue Baptist Church and South Berkeley Community Church.

Despite the direction these recommendations could take us, a clear-sighted coalition has formed, made up of both long-time South Berkeley elders and neighborhood newbies, set on righting the course.

Organizers first coalesced at meetings this spring held as part of the Adeline Corridor Planning Process, which has the goal of creating a blueprint for growth and development in South Berkeley for the next ten years. Realizing at the first meeting that most long-time neighborhood residents did not seem to be in the room, these decent people with a moral compass immediately began to ask questions.

Within days, leadership in the planning process had been sought that included community outreach by young people involved with Youth Spirit Artworks. Other important steps were taken by the citizen group to demand deep neighborhood inclusion.

Much to the chagrin of these "Friends of Adeline," as the South Berkeley planning process progressed, members learned that simultaneously as they engaged in efforts to plan the neighborhood's future, some of the very groups making up the fabric of the social services safety net in South Berkeley were being edged toward elimination in the newly proposed City budget. The group again sprung to action!

On May 26, Berkeley's City Council Public Hearing on the Budget was jammed with more than 75 people concerned about the inequitable direction our community was going, both related to South Berkeley agency funding, as well as with the interconnected issues of proposed new laws criminalizing homeless people, and downtown development favoring the rich.

The month of June will be critical to citizen organizing efforts to right Berkeley's course. At the City Council meeting on Tuesday, June 9, at 7 p.m., Berkeley will hold its Public Hearing on youth and homeless services budget items.

At that meeting, and at its following City Council meetings in June, our representatives will need to add these fundamental social services programs BACK into the budget. They will need to vote on a community agency funding package that truly reflects our commitment to equity in providing services to Berkeley's most underserved citizens.

To make your voice heard on this issue, and be a part of shaping the future of South Berkeley toward honoring and respecting long-time residents and their families — here are three things that you can do to help:

1. **Call and leave this message** for members of the City Council with your name and indicate that you are a local resident: "I support restoring full funding to South Berkeley community agencies in Berkeley's new two year Budget!"

Mayor Tom Bates: 981-7100—Most Important!

Darryl Moore: 981-7120 District 2 South/West Berkeley-2nd most important!

Lori Droste: 981-7180 District 8 Campus, Elmwood & Claremont

Linda Maio: 981-7110 District 1 North/West Berkeley

Laurie Capitelli: 981-7150 District 5 Solano/Thousand Oaks/North East Berkeley

You can email this message to all City Council members at: Council@cityofberkeley.info with a copy to: friendsofadeline@gmail.com

2. **Sign the petition** at: http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/berkeley-city-council-1?source=c.em.cp&r_by+672297

3. **Attend the Public Hearing** on Tuesday, June 9, at 7 p.m.__ Arrive at 6:30 p.m. Text 510-282-0396 to check the location in case its moved from Shirek Old City Hall at 2134 MLK Jr. Way. And if you can, please speak, to make your voice heard.

Help our community to be its best, most compassionate and caring! Take action this June supporting South Berkeley residents through restored community agency funding!

Proverbs 3: 1-35

My child, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on a tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding...

Déjà Vu All Over Again

"Positive Change" Boxes in Berkeley Repeat a Failed Model from the Past

by Carol Denney

The "Berkeley Cares" voucher program was launched in 1992. The vouchers came in designations of 25 cents and theoretically could be used for grocery, laundry and transportation expenses. The purchase of alcohol and cigarettes was prohibited. The public was supposed to buy them at participating merchant stores or the Health and Human Services Department and hand them to panhandlers instead of real money.

Except that lots of stores wouldn't take them and redeeming them through the city was a pain. Cash drawers and counters had no space for them or their explanatory displays. The vouchers themselves were flimsier than real money, tore easily, and were hard to manage since each one was only worth a quarter.

Cities that adopted "Berkeley Cares" vouchers as a model have all ended their programs for the same reason Berkeley did: It didn't work.

My favorite "Berkeley Cares" moment came when the University of California's Milton Fuji arranged a presentation on "Berkeley Cares" for a southside neighborhood coalition and asked a local homeless woman to explain the program to the group.

The woman was gracious, clear in her presentation, and thorough enough to mention that she couldn't seem to get stores to honor the vouchers for diapers for her child, or formula. As she listed the many things she couldn't use vouchers for — basic things which any mother might need — Fuji's face went bright red.

What she unintentionally made clear in her presentation that day was what everybody eventually and quietly agreed by ending the program: nothing works like money. Voucher programs get brassy *New York Times* coverage until they fail, and when they fail, they fail in quiet obscurity. The big brass band has gone home.

The Downtown Berkeley Association is still reeling from the viral video of one of its "ambassadors" beating up a homeless man while another "ambassador" offered no objection. But it apparently still thinks it is the best steward of four cash boxes planted around downtown, the keys to which will no doubt be in the pockets of the same "ambassadors" whose training video didn't manage to clarify to them that they can't just beat people up.

The Downtown Berkeley Association's CEO, John Caner, neglected to mention in his press release that San Diego, one of the cities mentioned in his press release as also having "Positive Change" boxes, has committed to Housing First as a strategy.

John Caner stands next to his Positive Change box on the pole. Caner has been instrumental in developing anti-homeless laws in Berkeley. Carol Denney photo

Housing First—San Diego is a three-year homelessness action plan developed by the San Diego Homeless Commission in November 2014.

Housing First—San Diego plans to renovate the the historical Hotel Churchill to create 72 affordable studios for homeless veterans and youth aging out of the foster care system. It will also award $30 million over the next three years to create permanent supportive housing that will remain affordable for 55 years.

The San Diego plan will also commit 1,500 federal housing rental vouchers and invest up to $15 million from the federal "Moving to Work" program to provide housing for homeless individuals and families. Finally, it will dedicate 25 units of the Homeless Commission's own units to provide transitional apartments for homeless individuals and families.

The success of San Diego's commitment to ending homelessness, if it comes, may have a little more to do with the programs listed above than the spare change from "Positive Change" cash boxes as filtered through the dubious hands of the Downtown Berkeley Association.

A Helpful Guide to Legal Resources for Homeless People in the East Bay

by Rebecca Byrne

Homeless and low-income people face a unique set of challenges in the legal realm. Simple actions such as sitting on curbs seem innocuous coming from other populations, yet somehow become problematic when homeless and low-income people need to sit down.

While this is a confusing discrepancy, it is the reality of the legal climate in Berkeley. Unfortunately, homeless and low-income individuals can face legal problems simply from engaging in the aforementioned activity, namely sitting on a curb. In addition to these kinds of stressful occurrences, legal problems can arise with public benefits as well. These as well as countless other problems contribute to the unique legal troubles of the homeless and low-income population.

However, there are resources provided by organizations which work with the homeless population to aid them in combating these problems. These resources are readily available and several organizations in the East Bay are eager to help, but lots of times people are unaware of them. My aim with this article is to draw attention to the organizations, as well as highlight the issues that they generally deal with.

While there are far more resources than the following, I have provided information about these services because I find these ones to be particularly helpful for the clients we serve in the Suitcase Clinic. It is likely that they provide more services than I will mention; however, we tend to refer clients to each organization when they are having a particular problem.

So, while they might be great at providing other types of services, I am going to include the specific types of services we continuously refer clients to seek from them because previous clients have had helpful experiences with them.

The East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC) is a very important resource that provides a plethora of different legal services. The three we most often refer clients to at EBCLC are the general legal clinic, the debt collection defense clinic, and the clean slate clinic.

The general legal clinic and the debt collection clinic are both held at the EBCLC's Shattuck location (3130 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley). As quoted from their website, the general clinic deals with legal problems involving "homelessness, consumer law, DMV problems, small claims cases, and tort defense."

The debt collection clinic provides legal assistance and information about problems involving credit cards and debt.

EBCLC's clean slate program specifically helps individuals who are facing legal issues and barriers because of past incarceration and, as a result, are having problems re-entering society. This clinic is located at their other location (2921 Adeline Street). It is important to note that East Bay Community Law Center can only provide assistance to low-income citizens of Alameda County.

The Homeless Action Center (HAC) is another amazing resource in the East Bay. We tend to send clients there specifically when they are having problems with public benefits. HAC provides legal assistance to persons who receive SSI, SSDI, GA General Assistance, CalWorks, Medi-Cal, Food Stamps, etc.

Clients who have seen the staff at HAC have most often come back with their public benefits problems resolved. Like EBCLC, HAC can only take clients who are citizens of Alameda County.

HAC has an office in Berkeley as well as one in Oakland. Their Berkeley office is located at 3126 Shattuck Avenue and their phone number is (510) 540-0878. The Oakland office of HAC is located at 1432 Franklin Street and their phone number is (510) 836-3260, ext. 301.

The People with Disability Foundationis an additional excellent resource for those having problems with SSI/SSDI. They are particularly helpful with issues of underpayment and overpayment. In addition, they can help with the appeals process if you have been denied for one of these benefits programs. They have two phone numbers: (510) 522-7933 (East Bay) and (415) 931-3070 (San Francisco).

There are many organizations which specialize in helping homeless and low-income persons with different legal problems. So it can be very helpful to consult with Suitcase Clinic's legal sector to find the resource which can be most helpful.

We are available at the General Clinic which is held on Tuesday nights at the First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley (2407 Dana Street, Berkeley).

While we cannot provide legal advice because we are not attorneys, we're well versed in many of the resources available in the Bay Area, and particularly in the East Bay, and with this information, we aim to provide helpful legal resources to any clients that come to see us. So, if you're having legal problems, a good place to start is to consult with the legal desk and get some helpful resources.

Underdogs' Anthem

by Claire J. Baker

We risked our worthy lives
in war machine's endless mess —
that perpetual psycho.
Now no right to rest?!
Street people share prayers and food.
The City says "No good."
Being human we get sleepy.
If we sleep we're kicked as creepy.
If we rest we might get stronger —
maybe not homeless any longer.
But most don't care if we rise —
seen as "useless" through narrow eyes.

Street Spirit

Street Spirit is published by **American Friends Service Committee.** The vendor program is run by **J.C. Orton.**

Editor, Layout: Terry Messman
Web designer: Jesse Clarke
Human rights column: Carol Denney

Contributors: Claire J. Baker, Rebecca Byrne, James Douglass, Carol Denney, Lydia Gans, Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, Sally Hindman,

All works copyrighted by the authors.
The views expressed in *Street Spirit* articles are those of the individual authors, not necessarily those of the AFSC.

Street Spirit welcomes submissions of articles, artwork, poems and photos.
***Contact*: Terry Messman**
Street Spirit, 65 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
***E-mail*: spirit@afsc.org**
***Web:* http://www.thestreetspirit.org**

Contact *Street Spirit* Vendor Coordinator

The *Street Spirit* vendor program is managed by J.C. Orton. If you have questions about the vendor program, please e-mail J.C. Orton at noscw@sbcglobal.net or call him at (510) 684-1892. His mailing address is J.C. Orton, P.O. Box 13468, Berkeley, CA 94712-4468.

An Open Letter from Religious Leaders

Do Not Criminalize Homeless People in Berkeley

To All Those Concerned:

As Berkeley and Bay Area clergy and religious leaders of diverse faith traditions, we stand lovingly and firmly united in opposition to new proposed laws criminalizing homeless people. As we describe in this letter, we do so through our shared, deeply held religious convictions calling us to compassion, justice and stewardship of resources.

The new homeless laws violate our deep conviction to express compassion for all living beings.

We share a deep commitment to seeing and respecting the wonder of humanity in each of our brothers and sisters daily through the choices we make and the action we take to honor the dignity of these neighbors. Thus, of course, we oppose the criminalization of homeless people. We believe that the new proposed laws will without question, increase ticketing and arresting of homeless people. We cannot support this approach to solving the problems of homelessness because it is demeaning and damaging to people's fundamental well-being, and self-esteem.

We are concerned that an indirect impact of these laws will be that, in order to make commercial areas "more civil," homeless people will be shuffled from one street corner to another, by threats of receiving citations, a practice that is cruel, when the deeper needs of these individuals for shelter, housing, jobs and other resources remain inadequately addressed. As many have pointed out, there is a two-year waiting list in Alameda County for affordable housing, which means most people on the street literally have no alternative options indoors, except possibly emergency shelter.

We cringe at the inhumanity that this "clamping down" on the rights of the poorest people comes at a time when market-rate housing is at an all-time high in the Bay Area. We believe these punitive laws — with the extreme difficulties people face during this period — is both ill-timed and, additionally, cruel. As clergy and religious leaders, we can never condone such an approach that is tantamount to "kicking our brothers and sisters when they are down."

The proposed new laws are unjust and violate our shared spiritual call to seek justice.

All of the great religions ultimately teach us to co-create a just world. As religious leaders, we know and hold dear the Scriptural teachings of Micah 6:8, Luke 10: 30-37, and the Qur'an Sura 4: 135-136, among many others, to be reminded of our call to justice.

By making illegal multiple new behaviors in commercial areas, the 2015 proposed laws almost certainly guarantee unequal enforcement of the law. If a non-homeless citizen pauses for a moment's rest on the edge of a planter, for example, what are the chances that person will be "moved along" with the threat of a citation? These new numerous laws — in all likelihood to be selectively enforced — are plain and simply wrong.

Additionally, regardless of what dollar amount the City of Berkeley spends cumulatively on resources for homeless people, we know that Berkeley still has a huge shortage of daily shelter beds, a dramatic shortage of permanent affordable housing units, and long waiting lists for existing housing programs, as well as long waiting lists for securing case management, and no in-patient detox program for people struggling with addiction. So punishing anyone who has failed to get off the street, would be difficult to justify.

If Berkeley had adequate resources available to serve the chronically homeless population, we believe that veteran social workers and street chaplains, devoted to building long-term relationships of trust, would have qualitatively better results in getting these often hard-to-reach citizens into services — far more so than citation-minded police, or other less committed outreach people, acting in accordance with these new and inhumane proposals.

As relates to homeless youth, we are aware that, despite the estimated average of 400 homeless young people on any given night (which includes "couch surfing"), this community continues to have shockingly inadequate services. Berkeley has no funded drop-in program for homeless youth and therefore no place for homeless young people to go during the day.

The City has the sum-total of 25 temporary youth shelter beds, for six months of the year and, in wintertime, the YEAH shelter is open from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. Additionally, Berkeley has a total of 15 units of permanent youth housing, and 28 units of transitional housing. That is it.

There is a huge waiting list for homeless youth case management. How could we possibly punish young people who are homeless, instead of focusing our collective civic energies on creating a real community safety net for these vulnerable citizens?

Thus, with such an appalling lack of adequate services for homeless adults and youth in our immediate community, as religious leaders our devotion to the ideal of social justice compels us to the hard work of creating these desperately needed social programs, in order to serve and empower the homeless population, and particularly, youth. The glaring inadequacy of our resources painfully makes the case that it is unjust to threaten and/or penalize homeless people for simply being alive and among us!

The proposed new laws demonstrate poor stewardship of resources, violating our commitment to cherish & love the earth.

Especially in these challenging economic times, we must focus carefully on the ways we use our precious resources of time, energy and money so that what we do is efficient, and demonstrably effective. As clergy and religious leaders, we believe the new proposed laws poorly use police resources, resources of the courts and the legal system, taxpayer dollars, and important community input.

Police resources are woefully compromised, if not wasted, through enactment of these unneeded proposed laws, since law enforcement is already stretched thin in daily dealings with larger community problems. We believe it is poor stewardship to divert police attention from other areas of need.

The new proposed laws further demonstrate poor stewardship since they create new unneeded laws when Berkeley already has twelve good laws that can be used to insure safe and clean commercial areas, and appropriate behavior by all individuals on the sidewalks.

Moreover, research on similar "anti-homeless" laws in San Francisco and other cities has shown them to be ineffective in meeting the goals of creating more civil common areas. It is safe to say, then, that these new laws will also prove ineffective. Any monies spent in pursuit of such misguided practices would be a waste of taxpayer dollars better allocated toward proven solutions to the problems of homelessness.

For the above-mentioned reasons, and more — namely the overarching human calling to compassion, to love our fellow brothers and sisters — we strongly oppose any new laws targeting homeless people in Berkeley.

Given the enormous needs of homeless and underserved people in Berkeley and the greater Bay Area, we challenge all those who care deeply about poverty to instead redirect whatever available energy, creativity, and resources that can be mustered toward these real solutions that have been found to work in solving the problems of homelessness: permanent affordable housing, adequate emergency shelter, jobs and job training drop-in centers, drug and alcohol treatment programs, and case management support.

We urge the City Council to give most serious consideration to the concrete alternative proposals which have been submitted for consideration responding to these challenges such as the YEAH/Youth Spirit Artworks Youth Housing Subsidies Proposal and the YEAH/YSA Drop In Jobs Training Proposal, as well as the forthcoming recommendations by Berkeley's Homeless Task Force.

Sincerely,

List of Signers

Rev. Rachel Bauman
Minister of Community Life
First Congregational Church of Berkeley

Board of Directors of Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action (BOCA)
Member Congregations:
Berkeley Chinese Community
Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists
Congregation Beth El
Congregation Netivot Shalom
Epworth United Methodist Church
First Congregational Church of Berkeley
Liberty Hill Missionary Baptist Church
Lutheran Church of the Cross
McGee Avenue Baptist Church
Newman Center Holy Spirit Chapel
Northbrae Community Church
Phillips Temple CME Church
St. John's Presbyterian Church
St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church
St. Paul AME Church
South Berkeley Community Church
The Way Christian Center
Trinity United Methodist Church

Rev. Alexandra Childs
United Church of Christ
Traveling Minister of the Arts

Rabbi David J. Cooper
Kehilla Community Synagogue

Rev. Mary McKinnon Ganz
Faithful Fools Street Ministry

Sally Hindman, MA, M.Div.
Executive Director
Youth Spirit Artworks

Rev. Sandhya Jha
Director of Interfaith Programs
East Bay Housing Organizations

The Reverend Jeff R. Johnson
University Lutheran Chapel of Berkeley

Rev. Earl W. Koteen
Community Minister, Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae
Affiliated Community Minister
Admissions and Recruitment Director
Starr King School for the Ministry

Rev. Kurt A. Kuhwald
Unitarian Universalist Community Minister

Rabbi Michael Lerner
Beyt Tikkun Synagogue Without Walls
Editor, *Tikkun Magazine*

Bruce H. Lescher, Phd.
Jesuit School of Theology Santa Clara University

Rabbi Rachel Jane Litman
Coastside Jewish Community

Rev. Dr. Gabriella Lettini
Dean of Faculty, Aurelia Henry Reinhardt Professor of Theological Ethics
Director of Studies in Public Ministry
Starr King School for the Ministry

Laura Magnani
Program Director for Healing Justice
American Friends Service Committee

Rev. Bob Matthews
United Church of Christ

Marc McKimmey, M.Div.
Diocesan Coordinator, Catholic Campaign for Human Development
Catholic Charities of the East Bay

Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt, President
Starr King School for the Ministry

Carl Magruder
Quaker Chaplain

Terry Messman
Street Spirit, Editor
American Friends Service Committee

Jim Neafsey, Phd/M.Div.
Homeless Retreats
Ignatian Spirituality Project

Pam Norton
President, Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

Rev. Kit Novotny
Young Adult Minister
First Congregational Church of Berkeley

Geraldine Oliva
Teacher, Berkeley Zen Center

JC Orton
Coordinator, Night on the Streets Catholic Worker

Peace, Earthcare and Social Witness Committee
Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends

Dr. Liza J. Rankow
Director, OneLife Institute

Dr. Clare Ronzani
Lecturer, Christian Spirituality
Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

Bernard Schlager, Phd.
Dean, Pacific School of Religion
Executive Director, Center for

Rev. Hozan Alan Senauke
Berkeley Zen Center

Rev. Sharon Stalkfleet
Lutheran Church of the Cross

Rev. Brian Stein-Webber
Acting Chief Administrator
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

Dr. Laura Stivers
Dean, School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Dominican University of California
Author of *Disrupting Homelessness-Alternative Christian Approaches*

Nichola Torbett
Founding Director, Seminary of the Street

Rev. Lauren Van Ham, M.A.
Dean, Interfaith Studies, Chaplaincy Institute

Frances H. Townes
Founder, Berkeley Ecumenical Chaplaincy to the Homeless

Rev. Dr. David Vasquez-Levy
President, Pacific School of Religion

Louie Vitale, O.F. M.

Rev. Dr. D. Mark Wilson
St. Mary's College and UC Berkeley
Youth Program Director, Pacific Center

To support these efforts, call:
Mayor Tom Bates at: 981-7100 or
Darryl Moore at: 981-7120
Leave this message: "I oppose criminalizing homeless people. I support the two alternative City Council proposals being considered for funding this year for youth housing subsidies and youth job training. I support the Homeless Task Force's recommendations!"

Life at Ground Zero of the Nuclear Arms Race

"First-strike nuclear weapons are immoral and criminal. They benefit only arms corporations and the insane dreams of those who wish to 'win' a nuclear holocaust."

— Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen

from page 1

Ground Zero's campaigns attempted to encompass all the dimensions of Gandhi's vision of nonviolence, from militant confrontation with injustice, to reverence for the lives of people on all sides in the conflict, to education and dialogue.

At times, that made their actions seem almost like a contradiction in terms. For even as Ground Zero organized some of the most militant acts of anti-nuclear resistance in the nation, it also strongly embraced the ethical values of nonviolence taught by Gandhi, King and Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

The same activists that were pushing nonviolence to its outer limits by staging increasingly radical confrontations with the U.S. military, were also highly committed to recognizing the humanity of the naval base workers, both civilian and military. They spent hundreds of hours trying to create a dialogue with Trident base personnel and refused to see them as the enemies of peace.

Military Chaplain Resigns

Ground Zero's adherence to nonviolence and its sincere and friendly attempts to communicate with base workers influenced many naval base employees to resign for reasons of conscience. This led to the highly visible resignation of the chaplain of the Trident base, Father Dave Becker, who decided he could no longer attempt to be "the chaplain of the Auschwitz of Puget Sound."

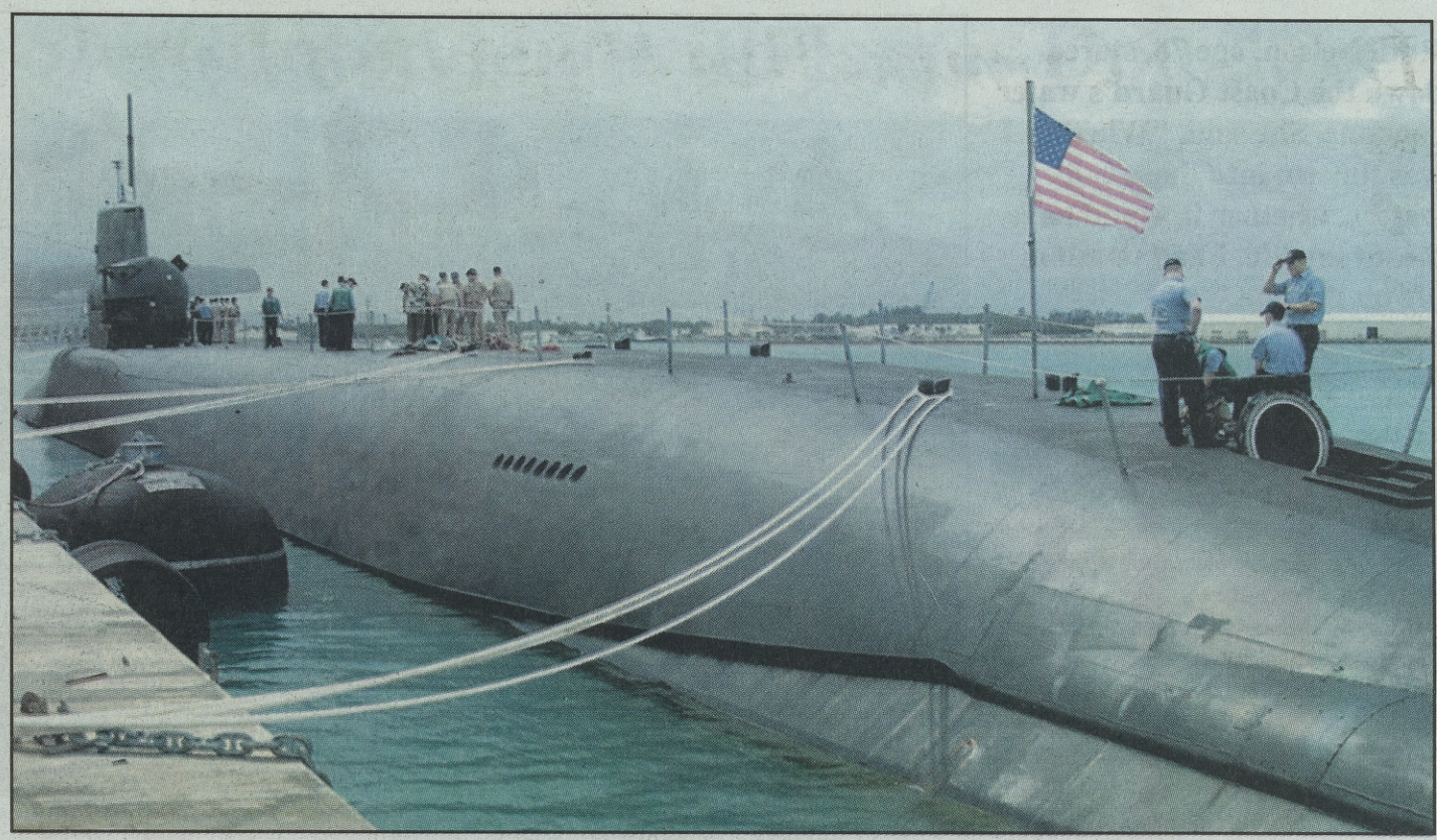
The Ground Zero Center also inspired activists in hundreds of communities around the nation to hold vigils on railroad tracks to block the White Train shipments of nuclear warheads from the Pantex hydrogen bomb assembly plant in Amarillo, Texas, to the Bangor base.

One of Ground Zero's most far-reaching successes was the enormous impact it had on the nation's faith communities. Countless bishops, ministers, priests, rabbis and nuns were directly inspired by Ground Zero's nonviolent campaigns to become personally involved in speaking out against the nuclear arms race.

Jim Douglass was an influential theologian and former professor of religion at Notre Dame and the University of Hawaii, and the author of such renowned books of peace theology as *The Nonviolent Cross* and *Resistance and Contemplation*. Shelley Douglass also was a theologian and an eloquent writer on nonviolence, and several other members of Ground Zero were deeply involved in Protestant and Catholic churches and Buddhist orders.

Ground Zero activists had intensively studied the movement-building strategies and ethical values of Gandhi's satyagraha campaigns and the U.S. civil rights movement, and their commitment to principled nonviolent actions enabled them to have a profound impact on faith communities.

Undoubtedly, the most inspiring religious leader who worked closely with Ground Zero was Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, one of the most courageous and radical opponents of nuclear weapons. The archbishop was deeply supportive of Ground Zero's nonviolent protests, and, in turn, Hunthausen greatly inspired Ground Zero and the peace movement as a whole when he became one of the nation's most outspoken voices for peace and disarmament.



The USS Ohio was the first Trident Ballistic Missile Submarine in 1982. Shown above in 2008, it became the first Trident to undergo a billion-dollar conversion into a guided missile submarine able to launch 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Hunthausen electrified the conscience of a nation when he denounced the Trident submarine as the "Auschwitz of Puget Sound" and called for massive civil disobedience and tax resistance to what he described as "nuclear murder and suicide."

His call to rebellion against the arms race, "Faith and Disarmament," was given on June 12, 1981, to the Pacific Northwest Synod of the Lutheran Church.

With the fiery urgency of a prophet, Hunthausen told the Lutheran clergy, "First-strike nuclear weapons are immoral and criminal. They benefit only arms corporations and the insane dreams of those who wish to 'win' a nuclear holocaust."

An Oceangoing Holocaust

In the immediate aftermath of the archbishop's uncompromising call to resistance, many Catholic bishops, Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis were moved to speak out against nuclear weapons.

And the peace movement found new hope. At last, someone with the power to make his voice heard had the courage to call the Trident nuclear submarine what it truly was: an oceangoing Holocaust, an underwater death camp loaded with weapons of mass incineration that could ignite a firestorm and slaughter millions.

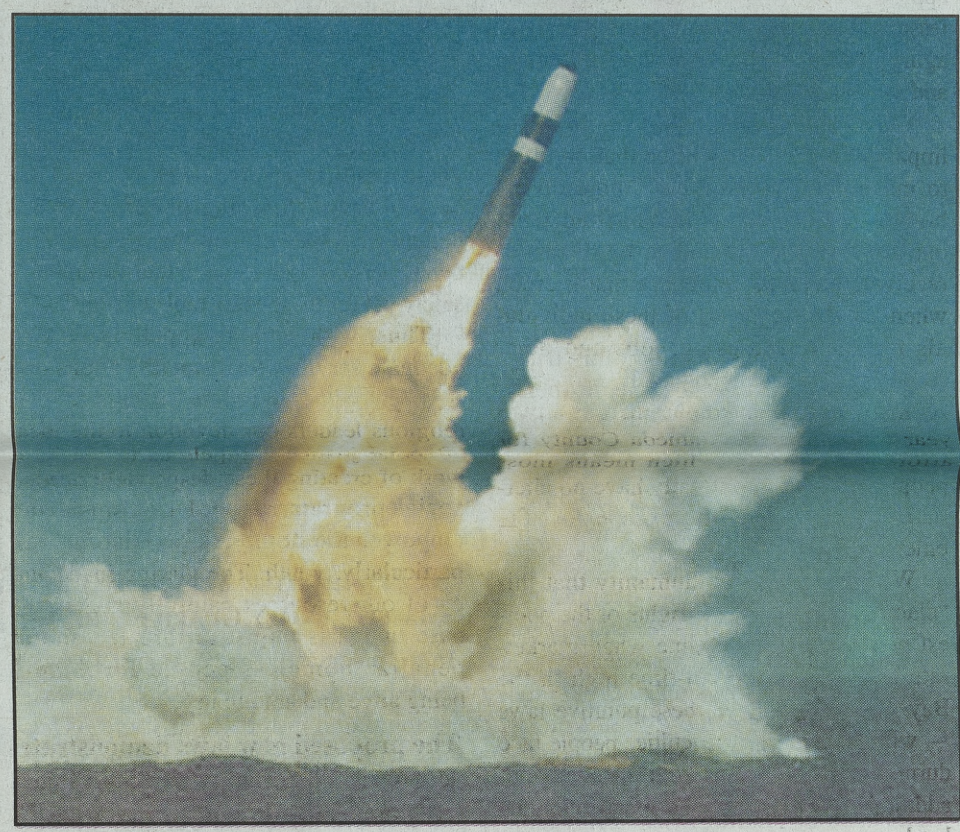
Most importantly, Hunthausen didn't merely call for a lukewarm set of reforms. He called for immediate nuclear disarmament and massive civil disobedience because of his conviction that nuclear weapons are criminal and immoral.

During the first years of the Reagan era, when many progressive voices were muzzled or ignored, Hunthausen called for the outright *abolition* of nuclear weapons.

The archbishop said, "The nuclear arms race can be stopped. Nuclear weapons can be abolished. That I believe with all my heart and faith, my sisters and brothers!"

What in the world could have ever led an American archbishop to denounce a U.S. weapons system as the Auschwitz of Puget Sound? We must retrace an amazing series of historic events that began in 1945, when Nazi Germany's leaders were put on trial for crimes against humanity in the town of Nuremberg, Germany, the symbolic birthplace of the Nazi Party.

During the Nuremberg trials, new cause for hope began to emerge from the destructive fires of war, and crucial principles of international law began to arise out of the ashes of Nazi concentration camps.



A Trident missile is fired from a Trident submarine. Their accuracy and explosive power give the Trident missiles a first-strike capability.

In the autumn of 1945, a few weeks after the end of World War II, Allied forces held a series of trials for political, economic and military leaders of Nazi Germany. In the first trial, 23 top officials of the Third Reich were charged by the International Military Tribunal with war crimes for their roles in planning unprovoked wars of aggression, and operating death camps where millions of civilians were systematically exterminated.

The Nuremberg Principles

Twelve subsequent Nuremberg Military Tribunals were held from December 1946 to April 1949, where an additional 185 Nazi defendants were prosecuted, including doctors accused of forced euthanasia, judges who implemented racial purity laws, officials in charge of "racial cleansing and resettlement," directors of the Krupp Group who manufactured armaments with a brutal system of slave labor, and directors of the company that made Zyklon B, the poisonous cyanide gas used to murder countless civilians in concentration camps.

The Nuremberg Principles that resulted from these trials defined crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. They are now foundational principles of international law, and have served as models for The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The Genocide Convention and the Geneva Convention.

Nazi officials had been put on trial by the victorious Allied forces, and yet international law is just that — an international set of principles that applies to *all* nations, not just to nations that lose a war.

War Crimes in Vietnam

Only 25 years after the Nuremberg trials were held, the U.S. government itself was being accused of war crimes in Vietnam when hundreds of thousands of defenseless civilians were deliberately massacred in saturation bombing campaigns, and targeted with napalm, Agent Orange, and anti-personnel weapons.

One particular protest against war crimes in Vietnam is the next step in this historic chain of events that connects the Nuremberg trials with the Trident submarine in the waters of Puget Sound.

In 1972, Jim Douglass, then a professor of religion at the University of Hawaii, committed civil disobedience based on the Nuremberg Principles by pouring his own blood on top-secret electronic warfare documents. Electronic warfare and anti-personnel bombs in Vietnam indiscriminately slaughtered children and civilians and thus constituted a war crime.

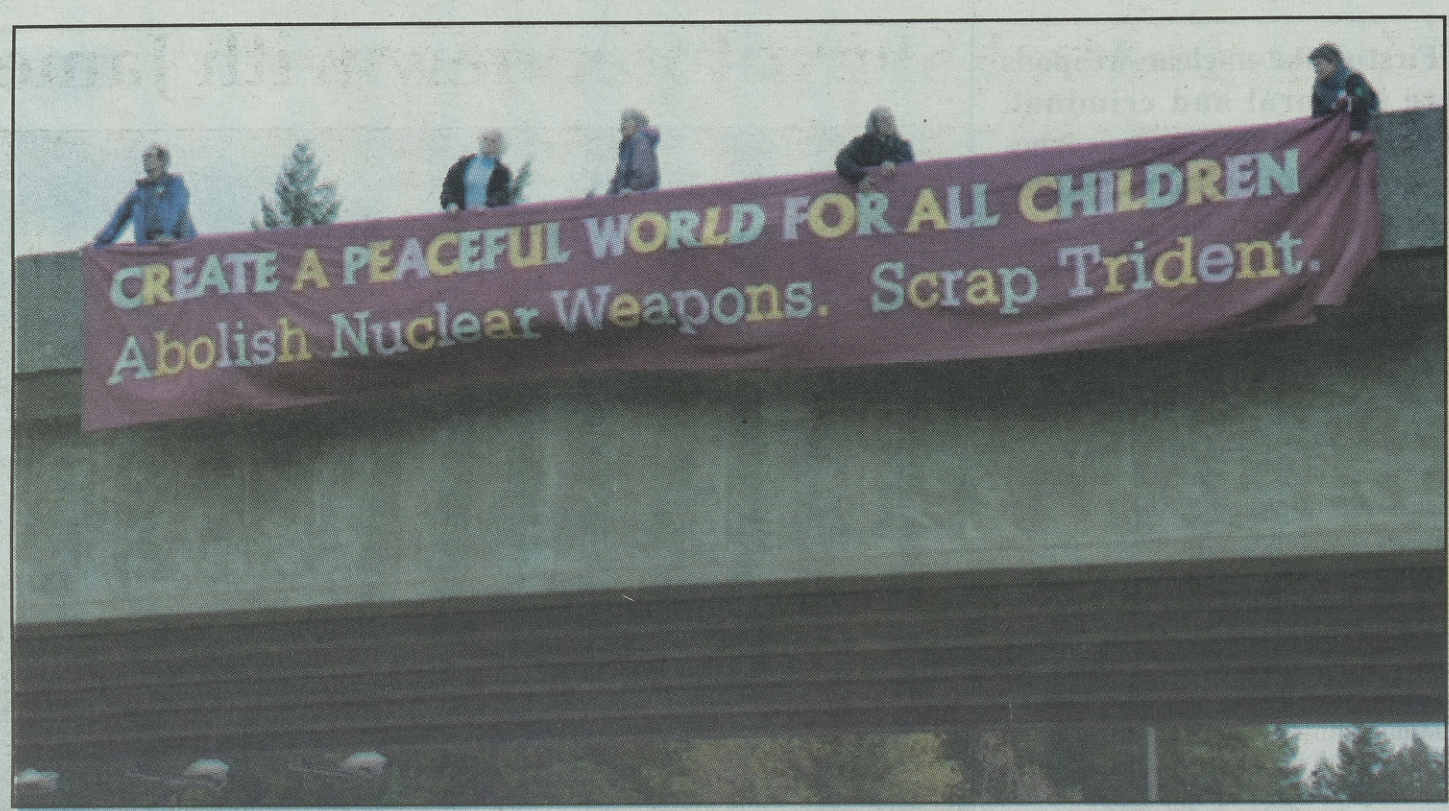
In a stunning historical twist, two of

See **Life at Ground Zero** *page 6*

Life at Ground Zero of the Nuclear Arms Race

Ruth Nelson, age 78, stared down the Coast Guard's water cannons. She said, "Whether I was thrown into those cold waters, whether it would have meant my life, I had to put my life on the line."

from page 5



Trident protesters on a freeway overpass: "Create A Peaceful World For All Children." Photos courtesy Ground Zero Center

the U.S. attorneys who prosecuted Nazis for war crimes during the original Nuremberg trials, traveled to Hawaii to defend Douglass after he was arrested for destroying files on electronic warfare at Hickam Air Force Base.

Mary Kaufman and Benjamin Ferencz were prosecuting attorneys for the United States at the Nuremberg trial, and now acted as defense attorneys for Douglass, citing international law in arguing that he was acting in obedience to the Nuremberg Principles by pouring blood on top-secret files in order to bring war crimes to the attention of the American public.

Nuremberg attorney Mary Kaufman said Douglass's trial had "the most startling testimony ever given in a U.S. courtroom on the war in Vietnam." A former Air Force sergeant testified that while he was stationed at Hickam Air Base in Hawaii, he had witnessed "the deliberate targeting of a Laotian hospital for obliteration bombing, as well as the targeting of numerous other civilian objectives."

War Crimes at Lockheed

A key person who attended this trial was Lockheed missile designer Robert Aldridge. When Aldridge heard the Nuremberg attorneys describe the nature of war crimes, he was stunned to recognize that his own life's work in designing first-strike Trident nuclear missiles also constituted a war crime, and in the aftermath of that realization, he decided to resign from Lockheed Missiles and Space Corporation for reasons of conscience.

It is striking how this single act of conscience by one lone individual would affect the course of the anti-nuclear movement in the United States.

After the trial, Aldridge visited Jim and Shelley Douglass and warned them that the Pentagon was developing a submarine that would be the most lethal weapons system of all time. Trident's accuracy and explosive power made it a first-strike weapon — and therefore a war crime.

In response to Aldridge's act of conscience, Jim and Shelley launched the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action. In that way, the Nuremberg trials had set off a chain reaction of conscience that reached all the way to Puget Sound — the home port of the Trident submarine.

Then, this chain reaction continued onward, as the anti-nuclear resistance carried out by Ground Zero influenced Archbishop Hunthausen to publicly declare his support for these acts of civil disobedience — a bold and highly controversial step for a high church official to take, especially since the archbishop's pastoral responsibilities included thousands of employees at the Trident base.

Finally, the chain reaction of conscience that began with the Nuremberg trials in 1945 came full circle when the Seattle archbishop declared that the Trident submarine was a crime against humanity comparable in magnitude to the Auschwitz concentration camp.

The next step in this historic drama was not long in coming. A year of so after Hunthausen condemned the Trident submarine, the archbishop was on a boat with other religious leaders in the waters of Puget Sound, a seafaring prayer vigil that was offered in support and solidarity for the nonviolent activists who had launched the Trident peace blockade.

The confrontation between the unarmed power of nonviolence and the Auschwitz of Puget Sound came to a head at the Trident peace blockade on August 12, 1982. Jim Douglass and the Ground Zero Center were instrumental in organizing this dramatic and risk-filled blockade because of their determination to offer their lives in nonviolent resistance to the USS Ohio, the first Trident submarine.

My then-wife Darla Rucker and I lived for two weeks on board a small sailboat, the "Lizard of Woz," with Jim Douglass, captain Ted Phillips and his wife Eve, and several other activists who had prepared for a boat blockade of the USS Ohio.

A Pre-Emptive Attack by a Massive Coast Guard Fleet

In the predawn hours of August 12, we received word that the USS Ohio was seen approaching the Hood Canal. The waters were suddenly swarming with a fleet of Coast Guard cutters that launched a pre-emptive attack on our tiny peace fleet. It was David vs. Goliath on the waters of Puget Sound.

The Trident submarine was truly a behemoth — four stories high and 560 feet long (the length of nearly two football fields) — and it was protected that day by a fleet of 99 heavily armed Coast Guard ships, a fleet larger than nearly every other navy in the world, as Seattle newspapers reported.

Our ragtag little peace flotilla had only two small sailboats and 20 tiny rowboats. Striking suddenly in the gray dawn, Coast Guard cutters rammed our sailboats, and then armed officers boarded the boats and pointed machine guns and M-16 rifles at our heads. From their ships, they trained high-intensity water cannons on us and shot our rowboats out of the water.

The Seattle newspapers called it "The Battle of Oak Bay," and published photographs of Coast Guard boats attacking our fleet with water cannons. The next day's *Seattle Times* pictured me in my wetsuit swimming in the cold waters of Puget Sound after the water-cannon assault had capsized my boat.

Ruth Nelson, age 78, had been the subject of a film documentary, "Mother of the Year," and she was arrested that day with her son Jon Nelson, a Lutheran minister. Our oldest peace blockader, Ruth Nelson stared down the Coast Guard's water cannons. She said, "Whether I was thrown into those cold waters, whether it would have meant my life, I had to put my life on the line."

Activists from the Ground Zero Center call for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

In the days leading up to the boat blockade, we had trained with Greenpeace volunteers who warned us that if we were swept into the cold, turbulent waters of Puget Sound, we would be at risk of death. All 46 activists who agreed to take part in the blockade knew we were facing 10 years in prison — and serious risks to our lives.

In his article, "The Peace Blockade and the Rise of Nonviolent Civil Disobedience," Matt Dundas interviewed boat blockaders Kim Wahl and Renee Krisco about those risks. Their responses revealed the attitudes shared by the peace blockaders on the eve of the confrontation with the USS Ohio.

"We Thought We'd Die In The Water"

"Despite threats of ten years in prison and a $10,000 fine, none of the protesters backed out." Wahl added, "I just knew in my heart that I had to do it." Looking back later, she asked her friend and fellow blockader Renee Krisco why they hadn't thought much about the potential repercussions. "Because we thought we'd die in the water," said Krisco.

No one lost their life that day, although our boats were rammed and sprayed with water cannons that sent us flying into the waters of Puget Sound. We were fished out of the water with long metal pikes, then arrested at gunpoint.

One reporter wrote that the arrests were so volatile, with so many heavy weapons trained on protesters, that "had a firecracker gone off at a critical moment, a massacre could have resulted."

One of the most moving occurrences on a day that was packed with inspiring moments was the vigil held on a prayer boat in solidarity with our peace blockade. That boat carried Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen and 12 bishops and church leaders from six denominations of the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

The chain reaction of conscience had traveled through the decades, person to person, from the courtroom in Nuremberg to the waters of Puget Sound.

"The Challenge of Peace"

As Jim Douglass explained in his interview with *Street Spirit,* Archbishop Hunthausen's uncompromising condemnation of nuclear weapons had sparked priest after priest, bishop after bishop, to condemn the arms race. That chain reaction eventually resulted in the entire body of the U.S. Catholic Bishops releasing their pastoral letter on nuclear weapons, "The Challenge of Peace" in 1983.

"The Challenge of Peace" broke through the public silence surrounding nuclear weapons in a major way, and gave a great deal of hope to the movement for nuclear disarmament. Douglass said, "Hunthausen played a huge role in the process that resulted in the bishops' statement. Hunthausen played a HUGE role. He would never say that, obviously."

Jim and Shelley Douglass played a HUGE role in the process that resulted in Archbishop Hunthausen's own acts of conscience and resistance. They would never say that, obviously.

See Interview with Jim Douglass *page 8*

Confronting the 'Auschwitz of Puget Sound'

The *Street Spirit* Interview with James Douglass

Interview by Terry Messman

Street Spirit: *While you were a professor of religion at the University of Hawaii in the late 1960s, you became active in the movement to end the Vietnam War. What led you to become involved in antiwar resistance in Hawaii?*

James Douglass: Before living in Hawaii, I lived in British Columbia in Canada for two years, writing my book *The Nonviolent Cross*. So I was out of it in terms of resistance in the United States since I wasn't living there. Going to Hawaii meant beginning to teach in a context which was also the R&R center for the military in the Vietnam War.

Spirit: *Hawaii was a major Rest and Recreation center for troops during the Vietnam War?*

Douglass: Yeah, a main one, and it also was a major training ground for soldiers going to Vietnam. The Schofield Barracks in Honolulu, Hawaii, had a jungle warfare training center. The people who were responsible for the My Lai Massacre trained there, as well as people involved in many other atrocities in the Vietnam War. I had walked through it.

Our community, called Catholic Action of Hawaii, walked through the tunnels beneath the model village in the jungle warfare training center.

Spirit: *The U.S. military had built models of tunnels like the Viet Cong were using in Vietnam?*

Douglass: Yes. It was set up in such a way that people being trained for Vietnam would envision each Vietnamese village as one that had tunnels everywhere beneath it, and every hut, every place where people were living, was Viet Cong — the two were equated in the jungle warfare training center. So that's the context of where I was teaching in Hawaii.

It also had Pacific Air Force headquarters. It had CINCPAC — Commander in Chief of the Pacific Command. Hawaii was where the planes took off for bombing Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and where the planes got their targeting.

So teaching in that context meant that you either were totally complicit by ignoring this source of atrocities — ongoing atrocities — or you engaged in nonviolent direct action. It was that simple in Honolulu, Hawaii, from the time I first arrived there in 1968 to the time I was last there in 1972.

Spirit: *You were teaching at the University of Hawaii during that period?*

Douglass: I was a professor of religion at the University of Hawaii's Oahu campus. I taught at the University of Hawaii from 1968 to 1969, and then I taught at the University of Notre Dame from the latter half of 1969 to 1970, and then, before I went back to Hawaii in 1971, I spent a year writing *Resistance and Contemplation*. So I was in Hawaii for a total of three years. The first period in 1968-69 was a period when the ground war in Vietnam was heavy and the second period of a year and a half was when the air war was becoming most intense under Nixon.

Spirit: *You were in Hawaii during the time when opposition to the Vietnam War was at its most intense, and the Civil Rights Movement was at a flash point.*

Douglass: What happened was that on April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King was assassinated. At the time, I was teaching a course on the Theology of Peace. It was a seminar, a very intense group, and several of the students came in late during the first class after King's murder, and announced that they had burned their draft cards across campus at a gathering.

"When scientific power outruns spiritual power, we end up with guided missiles and misguided men." — *Martin Luther King*

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action still continues to be very active in working for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

They were forming what became known as The Hawaii Resistance, and they invited me to join their group. I did. I was being confronted by people who were taking seriously what we were exploring in our readings and discussions.

Spirit: *So your own students inspired you. In some ways, were you being taught by your own students?*

Douglass: I was totally inspired by two sources: Martin Luther King, who was the inspiration for my students and myself, and my students taking his death so seriously that they made a commitment to going to jail for years. They were responding in like fashion to the stand he took. Some of them did go to jail for sentences ranging from six months to a couple years.

Spirit: *King was murdered and in response, your students become draft resisters and were sentenced to long jail terms. What impact did that have on you?*

Douglass: Soon I went to jail as a result of being part of their community of resistance. The Hawaii National Guard was called up within a month after the formation of the Hawaii Resistance following King's assassination. We had to decide how we would respond to troops being taken on trucks through Honolulu on their way to Schofield Barracks where they would be trained at the jungle warfare training center.

Spirit: *You mean that members of the National Guard were actually being trained and sent as troops to Vietnam?*

Douglass: That was not what was *said*. What was said by President Lyndon Johnson was that they were being called up to respond to the Pueblo crisis — a U.S. intelligence ship that received some fire when it came close to the mainland of Korea. But we suspected — rightly — that those National Guard troops would wind up in Vietnam. And they did.

[*Editor:* In May 1968, troops of the 299th Infantry Regiment of the Hawaii Army National Guard were called into active duty, and an estimated 1,500 National Guard soldiers from Hawaii were sent to fight in the Vietnam War.]

Spirit: *How did you respond when the activation of the National Guard brought the Vietnam war to the streets of Honolulu?*

Douglass: We discussed how to respond to that into the early morning hours prior to the troops being transported through town on their way to Schofield Barracks. I argued strongly against civil disobedience. We did not have a consensus process, so we voted, and the vote was against civil disobedience. But some of the members of the Hawaii Resistance said they were going to do it anyhow.

Spirit: *Why in the world were you against civil disobedience? I mean, you had just written* The Nonviolent Cross, *with the subheading "A Theology of Revolution and Peace."*

Douglass: I think I had thoughts like, "This will alienate people. This is not the time or the place." And I'm certain that beneath all that was, "I don't want to do it." [laughing]

Spirit: *Jim Douglass, the heralded author of* The Nonviolent Cross, *wanted to sit on the sidelines? [laughing]*

Douglass: I didn't want to walk the talk of our classroom or of Martin Luther King, for that matter. [laughing]

So the next day, we stood as a group along Kalakaua Avenue in downtown Honolulu, as the National Guard trucks roared past on their way to Fort De Russy, an open fort in the center of Honolulu.

I was holding a sign saying, "What Would Jesus Do?" He'd do more than carry a sign, by the way — you can put that in the interview. [laughing]

Spirit: *Will do. So did any of you do more than carry a sign?*

Douglass: It was obvious that we ought to do more. So we walked down to Fort De Russy where the troops began parading back and forth in front of the governor's stand. John Burns, the governor of the State of Hawaii, was reviewing the troops. We walked onto the field up to the governor and I told him why we felt this was wrong: These men were going to their deaths and to kill others in an unjust

See **Interview with Jim Douglass** *page 8*

Street Spirit Interview With James Douglass

from page 7

war. And it was wrong.

We were quickly ushered out of the fort. Then we were standing where the trucks would soon be loaded up with the soldiers. There were motorcycle police revving up their motorcycles and preparing to depart. You know the phrase, "moved by the Holy Spirit." I remember standing with everybody on the sidewalk, and then I remember us all sitting together in front of the police and the trucks.

We were photographed, identified and pulled out of the way. We weren't arrested on the spot, but a couple days later, a police officer showed up at the door of my apartment, and I was arrested and charged. And we soon went to trial.

Spirit: *You had thought earlier that this wasn't really the right time to do civil disobedience, but you suddenly found yourself sitting in front of the troop transport trucks. What took place within you that put you in front of those trucks?*

Douglass: I felt a part of a community of great people and we were making decisions together, or just instinctively doing things together. I felt no reservation whatever in working with this inspired community. And I am so glad that I was baptized by the holy movement of the Spirit in the Hawaii resistance.

Spirit: *Why are you so glad that you were moved to take part in this action?*

Douglass: Well, it changed my whole life. Can you imagine being a professor talking about nonviolence and the Vietnam War and not doing anything in Honolulu, Hawaii? What kind of a nightmare is that? So, we went to trial and were, of course, found guilty of what we obviously were doing. The judge, very ironically, sentenced all the students to a day or so, and then looked at me and said, "Since you were the ringleader, I'm giving you two weeks in jail." [laughing]

Spirit: *Yet you were really only the ring-follower!*

Douglass: I was the follower of my students and he gives me two weeks in jail! Anyhow, that was a further good experience, because in jail I then saw who wasn't present in my classes at the University of Hawaii. There were almost no Hawaiian students, but I was surrounded by them in Halawa County Jail in Honolulu.

Spirit: *That's where you met some native Hawaiians?*

Douglass: Yes, they were all around me. It wasn't because native Hawaiians are criminals. It's because the society I was living in was an occupied zone. Hawaii would be a free country of its own had the United States not occupied it and taken it over.

I was part of the Hawaii Resistance for a year and a half, and then I left to teach at the University of Notre Dame in the program for the study and practice of nonviolence. By the time I got back to Hawaii after a further year of writing *Resistance and Contemplation,* it was the air war that was escalating.

Spirit: *How did the Hawaii resistance respond to Nixon's escalating bombing strikes on Southeast Asia?*

Douglass: We formed a group called Catholic Action of Hawaii and chose, as our focus, a Lenten campaign in 1972 at Hickam Air Force Base, which has the same runways as Honolulu Airport. At that time, it was Pacific Air Force headquarters.

Every day during Lent in 1972, our little group of 10 people was in front of Hickam Air Force Base passing out a new leaflet to workers going into Hickam. We knew from members of the Air Force in Hickam who talked with us that this was the planning center for the air war in Vietnam.

We began to do nonviolent civil disobedience by walking into the base and going to the different buildings inside and passing out our leaflets, and, of course, being arrested. One day, I was driving out to the Hickam base to do our leafleting in front of the base and I got into the wrong lane of traffic and drove onto the base.

Ground Zero organized faith-based resistance to a national-security state based on nuclear weapons. *From left to right*, Utsumi Shoenin, Jesuit Father Bill Bichsel, Sr. Denise, Shelley Douglass, Jim Douglass. Photo credit: Ground Zero Center

It was an extraordinary connection to have Bishop Matthiesen at one end of the tracks encouraging workers at the Pantex plant to resign their jobs and take more peaceful occupations, and Archbishop Hunthausen at the other end of the tracks at the Trident base taking the step of tax resistance and denouncing Trident as the Auschwitz of Puget Sound.

Spirit: *You were actually able to drive right onto the base where the top-secret air war in Vietnam was being planned? How could that happen?*

Douglass: As I was driving in, even though I had no sticker on the front of my car, the guard waved me in. I guess he made a mistake. So I parked my car at the main building of the Pacific Air Force headquarters, and I thought, well I'll do a little experiment with truth, using Gandhi's term. I walked inside and nobody stopped me.

I saw a directory on the wall and I saw that one of the rooms was "Directorate of Electronic Warfare." We knew what the directorate of electronic warfare meant. We had a slideshow on electronic warfare. The Air Force could send out planes and robotic devices that would drop terrible weapons onto the jungles which could spray tiny pellets over an area the size of several football fields. And, of course, the electronic devices could be activated by an animal passing by, or a Viet Cong soldier, or a child going to get some water. That was a crime and a sin.

Spirit: *Didn't your attorneys later argue in court that this form of electronic warfare was a war crime under the Nuremberg principles?*

Douglass: Sure. That's a war crime that would cause the obliteration of civilians indiscriminately, just by the nature of the weapon. There was no knowledge whatever as to what they would be bombing. It was all done by these electronic devices. We knew the results of that bombing because of people who were talking to the victims. So we knew all about electronic warfare in Vietnam and here was the office for electronic warfare in the Pacific region in this very building.

So when I came out of the building and went back to our group, we decided to take a further step. We donated blood, and three members of our group, Jim Albertini, Chuck Julie and I, drove into the Hickam Air Force Base one day, and Jim Albertini and I went into the same building. He went into one office and I went into the office that said "Director of Electronic Warfare."

When I came into the office, there was a major at a desk. His name was Major LaFrance, as I learned when he testified at the trial. I gave him an envelope with our statement inside explaining why we were pouring blood on these files. Can you imagine writing this statement with the prayerful hope that we would be able to do that action? How on earth were we going to do that?

He took the envelope. It was addressed "Commanding Officer, Directorate of Electronic Warfare." And he walked into the next office. I looked behind his desk and there was a huge file cabinet. It said, "Top Secret" across it. I had my briefcase with a coke bottle full of blood in it. The file cabinet was wide open. There was a big lock on it but it was wide open. So I just walked back and poured the blood all over the files. The next thing I knew, I was lying on the floor and he was choking me.

Spirit: *Pouring blood on top secret documents must have been controversial at the time. What was the symbolism of pouring blood on the military files?*

Douglass: Because the files already had blood on them — the blood of the people of Vietnam. And we wanted to make clear that the blood of the people of Vietnam was our blood as well, and they were connected with our lives.

Spirit: *It must have been very startling when the major knocked you to the ground and began choking you.*

Douglass: He had come from behind. I didn't see him coming, and then he had thrown me down and was choking me. We had role-played it earlier in a session with our group. We spent all day roleplaying all kinds of things, and that was one of the things we roleplayed: if somebody threw you down. I knew both instinctively and by our roleplaying, that it was time to relax. And I was happy because I never imagined that we would actually be able to do this action.

He let up because I don't think he wanted to choke somebody. Then I realized that there was a group of quite a few people standing around us in a circle. All these other people had come from nearby offices after hearing the commotion. Then he stood over me and he told me, "Wipe it up — there's blood all over."

I said, "That's impossible."

He knew immediately what I meant. He said, "Don't give me any of your philosophy." What an insightful person! [laughing] Then he picked up my legs and he used my hair as a mop to wipe up the blood.

Strange as it may seem, I wasn't arrested. I was released and I was back teaching at the University of Hawaii the next day.

Spirit: *Did they ever arrest you or prosecute you for this action?*

Douglass: When I came back to our house in a low-cost area of Waikiki after teaching during the day, I had walked in without noticing that there were a couple of unusual cars outside. They broke down the door and came in and arrested me. I was taken and charged with destruction of government property and conspiracy and so forth — several felony charges.

Major LaFrance may be retired, and for all I know, he'll read this article and say, "I remember that!" If so, God bless you, Major LaFrance, you were my favorite witness at the trial.

Spirit: *Why was the major your favorite witness?*

Douglass: Because in the trial, I was my own lawyer and I was responsible for questioning Major LaFrance. So I asked him

See **Interview with Jim Douglass** *page 9*

Street Spirit Interview With James Douglass

from page 8

just to describe what happened that day. He was quite truthful. He said exactly what occurred and then he got to the point where I was wondering if he was going to be explicit about picking me up and wiping the floor with my hair. [laughing]

When I asked him what happened next, he said, "I performed a symbolic action."

Spirit: *He must have read your book. He took a page out of it.*

Douglass: He was taking off from our description of our action. He performed a symbolic action! He was a great witness.

Spirit: *What was the trial's outcome?*

Douglass: The judge at our trial, Judge Martin Pence, was a very conservative man. We discerned he was not going to allow us to examine the evidence against us. The evidence against us, of course, were the bloody files, and that was our evidence against the government because we were claiming those files contained evidence of U.S. war crimes.

So for our trial preparations, we were planning to use an international law defense: We were blocking a war crime. We invited experts from the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal to come to Honolulu, Hawaii, and two of them did. [Mary Kaufman and Benjamin Ferencz, two of the prosecuting attorneys for the United States against Nazis accused of war crimes at the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal after World War II, agreed to act as co-counsel at the trial.]

In preparation for the trial, we anticipated that the government was going to try to circumvent that defense by not bringing in the [military] files, and that the judge would rule in their favor. When that was about to happen in a pretrial hearing, the entire community was present. It extended beyond the 10 or so members of our Catholic Action group. The courtroom was packed.

So when the judge began to say that the government didn't have to bring the files into court — which was in violation of the rules of evidence — people in the courtroom began to protest to the judge. He lost control of the courtroom and he finally cleared the court so there was nobody left there except for the judge and the defendants.

We were also outside the court every day fasting and with signs protesting against this withdrawing of the files and beyond that, protesting the air war in Vietnam which was the ultimate purpose of all of this — and not whether we were going to go to prison, as we expected to.

Judge Pence then withdrew from the case, which was amazing.

Spirit: *Why did the judge withdraw? I've almost never heard of that happening in a civil disobedience trial.*

Douglass: He had lost control of the courtroom and so he withdrew from the case. I don't have a very good explanation, to this day, except that the Spirit was working. He was replaced by Judge Samuel King, a man who had just been appointed by President Nixon, and our trial was his first case as a federal judge.

He changed the ruling and said we did have a right to examine those files.

Spirit: It was an almost unbelievable turn of events that let the truth get out.

Douglass: I don't know how all of this came to pass, but it did come to pass! The government then was on the horns of a dilemma. They were about to drop the whole case.

Spirit: *Because the federal government didn't want to release in a public courtroom the military documents that you had poured blood on?*

Douglass: They weren't going to disclose those files in the court. They didn't want us to examine those files and make a case against them with experts in international law coming to Honolulu. This was all over the front pages of the newspapers, and it had become an important issue in Hawaii. So we had already gotten to the first purpose of our campaign, which was to break through the silence.

[*Editor:* Judge King allowed all of the witnesses to testify for the antiwar defendants. Nuremberg attorney Mary Kaufman called it "the most startling testimony ever given in a U.S. courtroom on the war in Vietnam." At the trial, a former Air Force sergeant testified that while he was stationed at Hickam Air Base in Hawaii, he had witnessed "the deliberate targeting of a Laotian hospital for obliteration bombing, as well as the targeting of numerous other civilian objectives."]

Spirit: *At that time, peace activists were trying to awaken the public about the full extent of the saturation bombing.*

Douglass: The bombing of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia was going on silently, in terms of the connection between Honolulu and Indochina. So we had broken through that silence with our trial. But we wanted the trial to continue.

The government prosecutors withdrew the felony charges which would have been five years apiece for conspiracy and destruction of government property, for a total of 10 or 15 years. They lowered the felony charges to misdemeanors. So six months became the maximum sentences. We went to trial and, of course, were found guilty.

Spirit: *You were sentenced to six months in prison?*

Douglass: Yes, we were sentenced to the maximum six months, which was suspended on condition of our paying fines of $500 each and reporting to our probation officers and fulfilling all the conditions of probation — none of which we did. We noncooperated with everything we were given.

As part of that noncooperation, I had already resigned my job at the University of Hawaii in preparation for going to jail for several years for these felony charges. My resignation was effective at the end of the following semester, so Shelley and I moved back to our home in British Columbia.

I had already refused to pay the $500 fine, so by moving I was in violation of the probation order that you're not allowed to travel without permission of your probation officer. We just went ahead and moved. Prior to that, I had made a trip to Copenhagen, Denmark, in violation of travel restrictions, to participate in an international war crimes tribunal that focused on the U.S. bombing of Indochina. And this was all done publicly. They tried to ignore it, but it was done publicly.

Spirit: *They were trying to defuse the impact of your resistance by ignoring the noncooperation? Did they ever arrest you?*

Douglass: By the time Shelley and I moved back to British Columbia, a warrant was issued for my arrest. So, for the next several years, we lived in Hedley, this little mining town in British Columbia, while I worked on another book, *Resistance and Contemplation*. Anytime I went across the U.S. border I was liable to be arrested. And I was arrested eventually, of course.

The Hawaii action took place in 1972 and I was arrested in 1975. Shelley and I had gone to the Los Angeles Catholic Worker to speak at a Day of Nonviolence held down there, and they advertised it publicly. But the FBI was a bit late. They came a few days after I'd been there, and by that time we were back in British Columbia.

But the following year, in 1975, I was invited to speak in Los Angeles at another Day of Nonviolence and this time, when I was speaking in the auditorium, a group of men in suits walked in from the back of the auditorium and announced that they were members of the FBI. I asked them to please sit down because I wasn't going anywhere. They did sit down and I gave my talk against the Vietnam War.

Then they came up and arrested me and took me out to their waiting cars. By that time, the audience was well organized and they blocked the cars for about half an hour, and they had to call in the Los Angeles Police Department to get out of the parking lot. I was then taken back to Honolulu for a resentencing for my violations of probation.

The day I was arrested in Honolulu was the same date as the last demonstration against the Vietnam War at the White House at which Shelley was arrested.

When I went before the judge, the courtroom was filled with friends and they were again prepared to noncooperate in some way when the judge sentenced me to six months in prison, just as they had when we originally were on trial.

Judge King said, "For your failure to fulfill the conditions of your probation, I sentence you to an unconditional probation." And he walked out of the courtroom! That was the end of that! [laughing]

Spirit: *When you learned in 1977 that the naval base in Bangor, Washington, would be the home port for Trident submarines, were you guided by Gandhi's vision of nonviolence in forming Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action?*

Douglass: Yes, we were very specifically guided. We studied Gandhi, and we based everything in the Trident campaign, and then in the succeeding Tracks campaign, on the Gandhian understanding of a satyagraha campaign.

When Narayan Desai (Gandhi's secretary and biographer) came to visit us, it was at a critical moment when we were struggling with all of that. We sought at every step of the way, from the beginning of the campaign, to recognize that the people on the other side of the fence — in this case, quite literally, the fence between Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action and the Trident submarine base — were our brothers and our sisters.

In those days, it was always, "The Russians! The Russians! They're the enemy." So that justifies weapons that could destroy all of humanity to "deter" the other side by fear — the Russians.

The nuclear weapons in our midst threaten us as much as they do the other side. There's nothing more suicidal than a nuclear weapon. We have to build a campaign to overcome our denial of the reality of nuclear weapons, and our denial of how they function to create fear in our own lives and fear of the so-called enemy.

Therefore, we organized a campaign around a base that was invisible, even though it's only about eight miles across the water from Seattle. We tried to bring home to all of us what this nuclear base means. So we lived next to it. That's the nature of Ground Zero, and that's the nature of Shelley and my moving into the last house alongside the railroad tracks going into the Trident submarine base.

Spirit: *Out of all the issues of war and peace you might have focused on, what led you to focus so wholeheartedly on resistance to the Trident submarine?*

Douglass: One person: Robert Aldridge. Unless I say the name Robert Aldridge, none of it makes sense. Aldridge was a key designer of the Trident missile system at Lockheed Missiles and Space Corporation at the Sunnyvale Plant in California.

He met with Shelley and I in Honolulu, Hawaii, when he came to support us in the Hickam Three trial. When we met him, we did not know he was a key designer of the Trident missile system.

While attending a public forum during that trial, Robert Aldridge was asked to comment on the statements made by the Nuremberg prosecuting attorneys who came to help us in the trial. Mary Kaufman and Benjamin Ferencz, two of the attorneys during the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal, defended us at our trial because they said we were acting in obedience to the Nuremberg principles by pouring blood on top-secret electronic warfare files in order to bring them to the attention of the American public.

Robert Aldridge was struck silent at that forum, and we never asked him about it. But several years later, when he came to visit us in our home in Hedley, British Columbia, he told us he had recognized that he was a war criminal by what the Nuremberg prosecutors said in that forum.

Spirit: *What did the Nuremberg attorneys say about war crimes that had such a deep impact on Robert Aldridge?*

Douglass: They said that first-strike weapons and weapons that directly violate a civilian population were war crimes in violation of the Nuremberg principles. Those Nuremberg principles, which are a foundation of international law, are violated both by electronic warfare — which is why we poured our blood on the files for electronic warfare — and also by the Trident nuclear missile system, which is what Robert Aldridge was building.

Spirit: *So when Aldridge visited you and Shelley, he actually told you that he had become aware of his involvement in war crimes during your trial in Hawaii?*

Douglass: Yes. And we were not the only part of this process. His daughter, as a high school student, was beginning to demonstrate against the Vietnam War, and she told him one time after dinner, "Dad, I may be demonstrating against your work soon." So the combination of what he heard from both his daughter in high

See **Interview with Jim Douglass** *page 10*

Were you guided by Gandhi's vision of nonviolence at the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action?

Jim Douglass: Yes, we were very specifically guided. We studied Gandhi, and we based everything in the Trident campaign, and then in the succeeding Tracks campaign, on the Gandhian understanding of a satyagraha campaign.

Street Spirit Interview With James Douglass

from page 9

school and the experience at our Hickam trial moved them to hold a retreat with their 10 children the following Christmas. And the family reached a decision that Dad — Bob — had to resign his job, and the whole family would have to take the cut in income and lifestyle. And all of them would have to take on the responsibility to change their lives.

So, at the age of 49, Robert Aldridge resigned his job after having worked at Lockheed Missiles and Space Corporation for his full adult life.

When he came up to our home in Canada to tell us about all that, we then asked, "Well, what's Trident?"

He said, putting the map on our kitchen table, "It's the submarine missile system that will be based right here." And he pointed to a spot that wasn't very far from us on the other side of the border (between the U.S. and Canada). That was the beginning of the Trident campaign.

Spirit: *I understand that first-strike weapons of mass destruction are war crimes under Nuremberg principles. But why did Aldridge conclude that Trident was a first-strike weapon?*

Douglass: He was designing the part of Trident that was specifically for a first-strike capability: the targeting. He was designing the targeting instrument that would allow a Trident missile to hit so directly on an underground missile silo in the Soviet Union as to destroy it before it was launched. And do you design a weapon to destroy an empty missile silo?

No! That kind of accuracy was needed in order to destroy a missile silo *before* the weapon is fired from the silo. Robert Aldridge was a smart man, and he realized that means a first-strike weapon.

So he identified all of that in hearing that a war launched by the Nazis fit the same category of war crimes as the Vietnam War, which his daughter was demonstrating against, and the missile system that he was designing at Lockheed. It all fit together.

Spirit: *Along with the first-strike accuracy of its missiles, the Trident submarine also has a destructive power that would indiscriminately kill millions of civilians.*

Douglass: Yes, even if you hit all those missile silos that were necessary in a first strike, you would also destroy over 100 million Soviet citizens. That's a war crime in another sense, and in the most devastating sense of all.

Spirit: *You wrote in* Lighting East to West *that a single Trident submarine could incinerate millions of civilians and had as much destructive power as hundreds of Hiroshima bombs.*

Douglass: A single Trident submarine had 24 missiles, and each missile was capable of carrying eight independently targeted nuclear warheads — meaning hydrogen bombs. Doing the math, eight times 24 is 192 warheads on one submarine, and each of those hydrogen bombs had 38 times more destructive power than the Hiroshima bomb.

One Trident submarine can destroy a country, even a huge country like the Soviet Union. At that time, 20 Trident submarines were scheduled to be built, and then you have a weapon that is capable of destroying the world many times over.

And that was before we even took into consideration the concept of nuclear winter. Through the use of nuclear weapons in a first strike, or for that matter, in any attack, we would create a nuclear winter around the globe, destroying the capacity for any human life at all to exist.

Spirit: *So after Aldridge alerted you that Trident submarines would be based near Seattle, what were the first steps in planning a campaign that could resist such an overwhelming weapons system?*

Douglass: Number one, every worker on the Trident nuclear submarine base is Robert Aldridge.

Spirit: *A potential Robert Aldridge, meaning a person of conscience?*

Douglass: Yes, potentially. Therefore we must respect, understand and grow in truth through dialogue with every worker, and every civilian military employee on the Trident nuclear submarine base. We lived alongside it and worked alongside it.

So everything we did had to fulfill that purpose. On the one hand, we had to block the system — that systemic violence we're talking about. That's the Trident system which could literally destroy the world through nuclear fire and radioactivity. We had to block that through nonviolent and loving resistance.

And secondly, we had to engage in dialogue and respectful relationships with the people who were involved in that system, just as all of us were, and are, involved.

We are all involved. That goes from paying taxes, which we all do, even those of us who are military tax resisters because they collect the taxes in other ways. And through our silence, which we all do to the extent that we all aren't constantly out there speaking against the evils in our society. And the number one evil is our capacity to destroy all life on earth, since we are U.S. citizens with the most powerful arsenal ever devised.

So on the one hand, *resistance*. On the other hand, *dialogue*.

Spirit: *Let's look at these two dimensions — resistance and dialogue. What forms of resistance did Ground Zero organize in confronting an entire fleet of first-strike nuclear submarines?*

Douglass: Well, we decided in our little group, the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, to create our own navy to block the U.S. Navy that was bringing the submarines into the Trident base. Our navy consisted of two sailboats and 20 rowboats. You know all about this, to put it mildly, because you were there on the boat. [laughing]

We had the Pacific Peacemaker, a sailboat that had come all the way from Australia to join the boat blockade, and the Lizard of Woz, a trimarin sailboat. The Pacific Peacemaker and the Lizard of Woz were the two larger boats, and we also had 20 rowboats, most of them to be strung out behind the Pacific Peacemaker and a few to be thrown into the water from the deck of the Lizard of Woz.

Our basic strategy was to block the Trident submarine with this small navy. But all our boats were stopped by the Navy's pre-emptive attack.

Spirit: *The Navy and Coast Guard sent 99 ships to attack our little boats when we tried to block the USS Ohio. Seattle newspapers reported they had sent out a larger fleet than most of the navies in the world.*

Douglass: Well, the 99 Coast Guard boats were *all* the Coast Guard boats on the West Coast of the United States. They didn't have any Coast Guard boats anywhere else on that day. They had them all in the area of Seattle in order to stop our ragtag fleet.

That was our first major experiment with truth on the waters of Puget Sound. They did a pre-emptive attack before the Trident sub reached our blockade. We knew it was coming because of a good bunch of Paul Reveres who were stationed along the Hood Canal at the end of the journey, and also through the Strait of Juan de Fuca going out to the Pacific Ocean. And we had observers all the way down the coast and through the Panama Canal. So we knew when the Trident submarine was coming to the day.

Spirit: *I'll never forget when it came over the horizon in the dawn hours of August 12, 1982.*

Douglass: It came in the dawn hours. And they did pre-emptive arrests of all of us on those two flagships before the sub was in our immediate vicinity. We were put into a little camp by the Trident base, and felony charges were filed against all of us, and within a few days the charges were dropped.

Spirit: *There were two different felony charges filed, so we faced at least two five-year prison sentences, as I recall.*

Douglass: Yes, and in fact, you and I got a couple of the heaviest penalties because we were charged with attacking a member of the U.S. Navy or something like that, because after we had already been arrested and handcuffed, we tried to jump off the boat to swim in front of the fleet. [laughing] You were charged with a higher one and so was I.

Spirit: *All we were trying to do was jump over the side and swim to block the Trident. We didn't try to attack a guard.*

Douglass: No, but we were charged with that felony.

Spirit: *Did you ever figure out why they dropped the felony charges against all the defendants?*

Douglass: Well, because they didn't want to engage us in court, where we would bring up everything to do with the Trident submarine, and Bob Aldridge would have come and testified. The whole issue would have been publicized in a big way in Seattle, just as the Hickam action had become front-page news for a full week in Honolulu.

Spirit: *Also, among the defendants we had people like Ruth Nelson, a 78-year-old woman who had been named Mother of the Year.*

Douglass: Oh, Ruth Nelson was a beautiful woman.

Spirit: *They didn't want to have people like that on the stand talking about how the Coast Guard had used machine guns and water cannons to arrest us.*

Douglass: They certainly did not.

Spirit: *The U.S. government also created a new "national security" felony that if you were within 1,000 yards of the submarine you could be sentenced to five years.*

Douglass: It was created specifically for the purpose of stopping the Trident peace blockade.

Spirit: *Ground Zero also organized several massive demonstrations where hundreds were arrested for climbing the fence into the Trident base.*

Douglass: Yes, there were literally hundreds who did that on several occasions. There were huge demonstrations involving thousands who came to the rallies and then hundreds who climbed over the fence.

Spirit: *In October of 1979, thousands came from all over the country to commit civil disobedience at the base.*

Douglass: During an earlier demonstration, the base chose to arrest one person in particular — it happened to be me — and to avoid arresting the hundreds of people who were inside the white line. In other words, they did a selective arrest process. The people who had crossed the white line were arrested and taken into custody and then released without being charged.

Spirit: *How did Ground Zero respond to the selective arrest?*

Douglass: In a second huge demonstration several months later (on October 28, 1979), having recognized what was going on in the first set of arrests with the charges being dropped, they all came back after they were released and got arrested a second time. So the selective arrest process didn't work. On that occasion we had a mass trial.

There were about 200 people arrested. At the mass trial, a lot of those people were given minor sentences or paid a fine. Many of them paid the fine because they lived so far away they couldn't come to the trial. As you know, some people like you and I were sent to jail for six months. And that's where Terry Messman and I spent quite a bit of time together. By the way, for all of you who are out there, he's the same guy that's interviewing me now. [laughing]

Spirit: *You and I and Karl Zanzig, who was also arrested at the Trident base, all served six-month sentences in Boron federal prison. Karl and I took a class in nonviolence you gave at the prison.*

Douglass: You have a better memory than I have! [laughing]

Spirit: *I'll never forget it. You were teaching the insights that later appeared in*

See **Interview with Jim Douglass** *page 11*

Abolish the Ambassador Program

from page 1

has somehow conferred upon the ambassadors the unjustified opportunity to make up arbitrary standards of behavior in a town which once had a city-sanctioned "How Berkeley Can You Be" parade and made tie-dye a global fashion.

It goes without saying, especially after the cascade of personal testimony before the Peace and Justice Commission regarding the prevalence of discriminatory and sometimes abusive practices of the ambassadors, that people on the streets often see a side of them that is far from benign.

The ambassadors of the Downtown Berkeley Association are, in short, an absurd gang of civil rights violators. Poor and homeless people are in the worst position to try to combat this kind of institutionalized discrimination.

Absent any responsible oversight from the City Council, this role is sadly falling to beleaguered, overworked city commissioners. And city commissions have too little influence over the council and the city manager to truly protect the public — even the public which might be poor or homeless — from absurd, artificial standards of behavior invented out of whole cloth by a private gang of green shirts to try to turn public streets into some peculiar version of Disneyland.

Berkeley citizens need to see the very real, inevitable results of the city's poor planning when it comes to housing policy. They need to know when people are in need, or cold, or hungry. Chasing poor and homeless people off the streets or into the parks is an irrational response to the emergency we face, thanks to a City Council majority which refuses to address a lack of shelter, low-income housing, and a need for public campgrounds.

We've already had several acts of brutality committed by the ambassadors sent roving through our streets by the landlords' lobby known as the DBA.

It is time to call for a complete suspension of the ambassador program until all voices are equally represented on the board of the DBA, until its programs honestly meet true community standards, and until the DBA recognizes its role in creating the crisis in housing which represents the truly inappropriate behavior — leaving families to suffer in the streets.

Both the Peace and Justice Commission and the Homeless Task Force have now called for the termination of the ambassador program with respect to its interaction with poor and homeless people.

Street Spirit Interview With James Douglass

from page 10

your book, Lightning East to West. You said that nonviolent movements needed to discover the moral equivalent of Einstein's equation for converting matter into energy. Then, just before I got out of prison in July 1981, Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen likened the Trident submarine to Auschwitz.

Douglass: The most important resister in the Trident campaign — to single out one person other than Robert Aldridge — was Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen.

Spirit: *Why was Hunthausen such a significant voice in the movement for nuclear disarmament?*

Douglass: He gave a speech in which he stated to a very large number of religious leaders gathered in Tacoma, Washington, that Trident was the "Auschwitz of Puget Sound." And he took a stand of refusing to pay his income taxes in order to resist Trident.

Spirit: *After he made that statement, we invited him to speak at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley where he urged hundreds of religious leaders to resist nuclear murder and suicide.*

Douglass: Yes. And as a result, roughly six months later, he actually stated publicly, "I have now decided to stop paying half of my taxes" — the half of his taxes that would have gone to military appropriations and nuclear weapons.

Spirit: *It was such an important turning point when an archbishop actually called for massive civil disobedience.*

Douglass: Yes, and he not only called for it — he did it! His tax resistance was nonviolent civil disobedience in the most radical sense possible.

Spirit: *When Archbishop Hunthausen declared that Trident was the Auschwitz of Puget Sound, what effect did it have on your work at Ground Zero? And what effect did it have on the general public?*

Douglass: It electrified the general public. And it profoundly encouraged us.

We all knew Archbishop Hunthausen. We'd known him for years and he'd already done all kinds of things to support our work. He supported a 30-day fast that we engaged in. He sent information on the Trident campaign to his entire body of priests and religious leaders in the diocese. He brought over to Ground Zero all of his administrative leaders in the archdiocese for a retreat on the issue of Trident.

He'd done everything he could — up to refusing to pay his own taxes — before he took that step. So we were one in community with Archbishop Hunthausen before he took that further step.

Spirit: *What was the response of the Church hierarchy to Hunthausen's call for massive resistance to the arms race?*

Douglass: Well, I would say it was a mixed response. A number of Catholic bishops within the United States made statements of their own against nuclear weapons in the months following Archbishop Hunthausen's statement.

I think they were to some degree, if not largely, inspired by his courage. I found that remarkable because there had been so much silence before then.

Spirit: *Silence from church leaders about the threat of nuclear weapons?*

Douglass: So much silence from religious leaders across the board, and certainly from Catholic bishops. So I found that very encouraging. I would read one statement after another about nuclear weapons, and that led up eventually to "The Challenge of Peace," the Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear weapons.

Spirit: *The bishop's letter gave so much hope to the peace movement in 1983. And you believe that Hunthausen's statement played a role in inspiring the bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear weapons?*

Einstein's formula changed the world by showing the conversion of mass to energy. Sculpture of Einstein's formula in Berlin, Germany

Douglass: It played a *huge* role in the process that resulted in the bishops' statement. Hunthausen played a huge role. He would never say that, obviously.

Spirit: *In what way did Hunthausen's statement play such a huge role?*

Douglass: There was nothing vaguely like Archbishop Hunthausen's statement before him. And following his statement there were many!

The only bishop in the U.S. who closely paralleled Archbishop Hunthausen, and actually became a very good friend of his, was Bishop (Leroy) Matthiesen in Amarillo, Texas. And of course, they were bishops at the opposite ends of the tracks of the White Train.

Spirit: *So the Pantex plant in Amarillo assembled the hydrogen bombs in Bishop Matthiesen's diocese, then shipped them to Hunthausen's diocese near Seattle?*

Douglass: Amarillo is where the Pantex plant exists, and that is the final assembly point for all nuclear weapons in the United States. It was an extraordinary connection to have Bishop Matthiesen at one end of the tracks encouraging workers at the Pantex plant to resign their jobs and take more peaceful occupations, and Archbishop Hunthausen at the other end of the tracks at the Trident base taking the step of tax resistance and denouncing Trident as the Auschwitz of Puget Sound.

The two of them came to our house at the end of the tracks and held a retreat for a group of us one weekend as part of the Tracks campaign. That was very inspiring.

Spirit: *It must have been amazing to have both Hunthausen and Matthiesen with you at Ground Zero. They were heroes of the peace movement — two of the most courageous voices we ever had.*

Douglass: And they sent out a letter over their signatures to all of the Catholic bishops in the dioceses along the train tracks. And it resulted in 11 or 12 bishops along the tracks joining in their statement encouraging people to take a stand against the nuclear arms race and the train shipments. When the bishops made that statement together, it was reported on the front page of the *New York Times*.

Spirit: *Archbishop Hunthausen not only influenced Catholic leaders. When we invited him as a keynote speaker at Pacific School of Religion, he inspired hundreds of Protestant church leaders with his call to resistance.*

Douglass: Archbishop Hunthausen really was a catalyst in a movement of religious leaders, not only Catholics but others as well. Remember that the statement in which he began to become so prominent was made to the Lutheran leaders of the Pacific Northwest. He wasn't speaking to Catholics; he was speaking to the Lutheran leaders who had invited him to speak because he had already become a leader on this issue. That's when he made the statement that gained national attention.

He had an effect on everybody. In the Pacific Northwest, especially, he was meeting every week with all the other key religious leaders. They ate breakfast together. I joined them a number of times so I met these people and Archbishop Hunthausen was the most prophetic voice and the inspiration in their midst. These were all the most prominent religious leaders at that time in Seattle and everyone at these breakfasts was very supportive of Archbishop Hunthausen. The Jewish leaders were very supportive of Archbishop Hunthausen. So it was right across the board that religious leaders said, "This man is speaking out in a way that is both prophetic and pastoral."

Spirit: *I understand his prophetic role, but what were they referring to in saying he was also "pastoral" in regards to the nuclear issue?*

Douglass: They meant the way that he responded to people who were critical of him. He came over to the areas right around the Trident base and went to the different parishes and listened to all the people who were wondering why he was making such statements. He, of course, explained that this is the way he understood the Gospel, but he said that very gently and compassionately and listened to everything that they had to say.

Spirit: *Did Archbishop Hunthausen's call to resist the arms race have much effect on workers on the Trident base?*

Douglass: I will give an example of the impact he had. I was passing out leaflets in front of the Trident base, as we did every week to the cars and the drivers coming into the base, and a man with a clerical collar on stopped as I was handing him a leaflet. He said, "I want to have dinner with you."

Well, that was an unusual response. He had dinner with us a few days later. He was the Catholic chaplain of the Trident nuclear submarine base, Father David Becker. So he came to dinner at our Tracks house located alongside the Trident base where the railroad tracks go in.

When Father Dave Becker came in, the first sentence he said after he sat down on the sofa was, "I want to understand from you what it means to be the chaplain of the Auschwitz of Puget Sound."

Spirit: *What a question! How could you even answer a question life that?*

Douglass: We just had dinner together and talked. And that process was the dialogue that Gandhi talked about as the experiment in truth with the person on the other side of the fence — which was the point of our whole campaign.

And through that dialogue, Father Dave engaged in a dialogue with his church. And where were the people of his church? On the Trident base! On one Sunday, alternately, he would preach about Trident as he was learning to understand it, and the nature of Trident, which was to threaten and eventually, if carried out in its purpose, to destroy the world.

On the following Sunday, he would dialogue and very peacefully engage in conversation with his church community. He was doing the same thing in his church that we were doing in relation to the whole Trident process. He was confronting and resisting the evil, and dialoguing with all of us who are involved in that evil.

Spirit: *What was the outcome of his speaking out against nuclear arms while he was a chaplain on the naval base?*

Douglass: He resigned his commission and his chaplaincy on the base, and then became a priest in the diocese outside the base. That was, of course, from the inspiration of Archbishop Hunthausen.

Spirit: *So he resigned when he realized that a chaplain at Auschwitz was not what was needed. What was needed was a conscientious objector.*

Douglass: Now let me tell you the reason why he asked me that question as he was driving into the base. He had just received a full copy of Archbishop Hunthausen's address to the Lutheran leaders in Tacoma, Washington.

Archbishop Hunthausen sent the statement to every priest in the diocese and, of course, one of them was the chaplain of the Trident base, Father Dave Becker.

Well, Dave Becker got his copy *inside* the Trident base. It went right through the mail into the Trident base. He read it in his office and he was electrified, as were all of these other people outside the base.

Then he asked himself, "My God, what does it mean for me to be the chaplain of the Auschwitz of Puget Sound?"

So he resigned his commission and he became a pastor in a church outside the base. He is an example of dozens of people who did that and who then subsequently became extended members of the Ground Zero community.

Spirit: *So there were several other conscientious objectors who resigned?*

Douglass: There were several other Catholics who were deeply influenced by Archbishop Hunthausen and who resigned from the Bangor Naval Base. Archbishop Hunthausen was the voice that they were listening to especially. Many of these people, including Father Dave Becker, did interviews with us.

We would interview these folks who resigned their jobs and then we would put those interviews in our Ground Zero newspaper and leaflet that newspaper to the 2,000 Trident employees who took our leaflets every week. It was a circular process. They stopped working at the Trident base and stated publicly that they were taking that step. I'm not even counting the people who never let us know about it. I think there were far more than those who did let us know about it. We know of about a dozen who left.

Spirit: *It must have been a great sacrifice for them to resign. Are there any compelling stories that show why they would take such a difficult step?*

Douglass: Every one of them is a compelling story. Let me give one example.

See **Interview with Jim Douglass** *page 12*

Street Spirit Interview With James Douglass

from page 11

Mona Lee was a worker on the Trident base, as was her husband, and she lived alongside the Trident base. She had received many of our leaflets as she was going into the Trident base.

One day in the Trident base, she was given a tour with other base employees of the Strategic Weapons Facility Pacific, the highest security area where the nuclear weapons are located. Mona touched a nuclear weapon that day and she suddenly realized, as she put it: "This is real."

From that point on, her life moved in a different direction. She was, and is, a Quaker. Her Quaker beliefs had never connected with nuclear weapons until she touched one. She became a person at Ground Zero in dialogue with us. She did an interview with us. She resigned her job.

She became, years later, a leader in the WTO demonstration in Seattle, Washington. [*Editor:* On November 30, 1999, tens of thousands of people staged massive street protests of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle.]

Spirit: *What a journey she took.*

Douglass: She became a leader! Many other people congregated around her and her new husband. Her old marriage ended. She also became a leader in creating the transit system between downtown Seattle and Sea-Tac Airport — a beautiful light rail system. Then she and her husband started a coffeehouse right alongside it.

Spirit: *Many nonviolent campaigns do not develop an ongoing dialogue with the people on the other side of the issue. Can you describe how you created a dialogue with workers on the Trident base?*

Douglass: We leafleted every week. The fence between our side of the issue and their side of the issue — the fence between the Trident base and Ground Zero — was being overcome by our dialogue with those workers, and by the leafleting we did every week, to a point where 2,000 people a week were taking our leaflets. As a result, there were a series of resignations on their part. That's how a real nonviolent campaign advances.

In the course of that process, the base authorities, and the naval authorities above them, tried to stop our leafleting by arresting us when we were inside the white line for trespassing on the base. So we leafleted outside the white line and we were then arrested by the county sheriffs for endangering traffic. And we couldn't leaflet in mid-air, so we were alternately arrested by the base authorities for trespass on the naval base and by Kitsap County sheriffs for blocking traffic.

Spirit: *How did the workers going into the base respond to your leafleting?*

Douglass: The number-one thing was that when we were arrested, civilian workers at the Trident base who were getting our leaflets when they were driving into the base, testified at our trials in our support. And they were risking their jobs and their security and everything else.

Spirit: *It seems amazing that workers at the Trident base would break the silence by testifying during your trial.*

Douglass: As a result of that process, the Kitsap County sheriffs who were part of the testimony at our trial — they had to come in and testify against us — the same sheriffs who were arresting us, and in some cases literally cursing us as they arrested us, became our good friends.

We had to sit around together in all of this process of going through the trial, and we talked together and dialogued together. And then they would testify that we were standing in such and such a place, and we were found guilty in all of those instances, and the judge would send us to jail.

When Father Dave Becker came in, the first sentence he said after he sat down on the sofa was, "I want to understand from you what it means to be the chaplain of the Auschwitz of Puget Sound."

Spirit: *Well, since their testimony sent you to jail, in what way are you saying they became friends?*

Douglass: Because eventually the sheriff refused to cooperate with the Navy!

Spirit: *That almost never happens in a peace action. In what way did the sheriffs refuse to cooperate with the Navy?*

Douglass: The key moment came when we were charged in a further act of civil disobedience with blocking a train. We sat in front of a train carrying nuclear weapons going into the Trident base. We were charged with conspiracy to block a train, as well as being charged with blocking a train. So in the course of the trial, which was in a Kitsap County courtroom before a Kitsap County judge, the sheriffs had to testify to prove the charge of conspiracy.

They described all the meetings they had with us, because we told them everything we were going to do about blocking the train. We didn't want the train to run over us, and they and we — together — planned how we would block the train in such a way that the train would stop, and they would arrest us. In other words, we tried not to create a situation where either they or we would get run over by a train, which had almost happened at the demonstration before that one.

So in the course of the trial, it became obvious to the judge and the jury that at the heart of the conspiracy were the Kitsap County sheriffs!

Spirit: *Because they were involved in planning the action with you? So what did the judge do when he realized that?*

Douglass: The judge dismissed the conspiracy charge! Because everything that we did, the sheriffs were doing — except sitting in front of the train at the end. But so far as conspiring, planning the action, they did it as much as we did.

That's the whole nature of the Trident campaign: to work together with the other side. We were working together with the sheriffs. Now some people in the movement hated that because they said, "You can't do anything with the other side."

And we said, "Well, of course, we have to. We don't want them to get run over by a train anymore than we want to. And you all saw that in the last demonstration we had, it got out of hand and people were almost literally killed."

Spirit: *Did the judge throw out all the charges or just the conspiracy charges?*

Douglass: He dismissed the charges of conspiracy. Then the jury heard all the evidence for why we were blocking the train, and they found us not guilty. We had confessed to everything about blocking the train, and the jury found us not guilty! How did they manage to do that?

Spirit: *Obviously, that's my next question too. How did the jury manage to find you not guilty?*

Douglass: Number one, these were all Kitsap County people on the jury. We didn't try to knock off people in Kitsap County who, of course, are all involved either directly or indirectly in the Navy base. We didn't try to block any of those people from the jury. And they found us not guilty! How did that happen?

Well, one of the jurors testified at our forum after the trial. She said, "We just had to find a way to find you not guilty because it was obvious that you weren't doing anything wrong." Then she said, "I suggested a way."

Spirit: *I wish more jurors would find a way. So how did she explain the jury's plan to find you not guilty?*

Douglass: This was a woman who had her home right by the Hood Canal. She said, "One day, the oysters in the water at the edge of my property were being taken from my property by some people who came along the water and took the oysters on the beach area that I owned."

She called the police and told them that people were trespassing but the police ignored this. She said, "I told the jury: 'I called the police about trespass on my property and they did nothing. Now they're trying to put these people in jail for trespassing on federal property — which is all *our* property. That's not fair.' "

The jury agreed with her. And they found us not guilty.

Spirit: *Do you trace that back to the depth of dialogue that Ground Zero established with naval base workers?*

Douglass: We were *living* in that community. We were living in Kitsap County, Washington. Why? Because in our former residence, we were coming from the outside and then saying to the people on the inside (of the base), "This is wrong."

Thomas Merton said we cannot engage in nonviolent transformation from the outside. It is impossible. You have to be on the inside. He meant that in two senses: within ourselves personally, and communally.

In the communal sense, we had to live in Kitsap County to truly engage in dialogue with any of those people. So we're not only passing out leaflets. We're living in the community of people we're trying to engage in dialogue. They're living all around us. We were part of the community.

Spirit: *What was that like for you and Shelley on a personal level?*

Douglass: Our son was the person we worried about most in this process because when we moved down in 1977, Tom was six years old. So what about Tom? We're moving down there to be practitioners of nonviolence in ways that we can maybe deal with better; but he's going to be in the midst of a school in which all the other students are the sons and daughters of Trident sub workers in the Navy or Trident sub people in the civilian population.

So when Tom was going to his soccer games, we would cheer on the sidelines with — who? All the Navy people! [laughing] And when we went to a library meeting, all the parents in the library meeting were naval base people.

Thanks to Tom, we were parts of the community in ways that we wouldn't have been if we didn't have a child in school. And through the providence of God, the teachers that he had in that school system, all the way up until high school, were, one after another, remarkably supportive of him and his parents.

At the very end of that process, on the graduation day of his high school, we came into the auditorium with all the Buddhist monks in their yellow robes, immediately identifying themselves as the people who were sounding their drums for peace outside the base as we were blocking trains. And, of course, Shelley and I were identified as being very visible people at Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Change.

At that graduation ceremony, the graduating class stood up and sang their chosen graduation song, which was "Imagine" by John Lennon.

Spirit: *Wow! They chose a peace anthem for their graduation?*

Douglass: It was the greatest peace anthem I could have IMAGINED them to sing at that moment. The students chose that song. Some of them, including our son, had chosen to identify themselves as conscientious objectors.

Next month, in the final part of the *Street Spirit* interview with Jim Douglass, Ground Zero mobilizes activists and train buffs in hundreds of communities to block the White Train carrying nuclear bombs. Jim and Shelley Douglass open a Catholic Worker house of hospitality for homeless families in Birmingham, Alabama. Then we follow Jim Douglass on Middle East peace actions in Palestine, Israel and Iraq.